

Claremont School of Theology

***Pīlagšīm* in the Deuteronomistic History:
Colonialism, Immigration, Repatriation, and Indigenous Populations in the Persian Period**

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To my parents.
All of you;
you know who you are.

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ABBREVIATIONS

1-2 Chr	1-2 Chronicles
1-2 Kgs	1-2 Kings
1-2 Sam	1-2 Samuel
AOTC	Abingdon Old Testament Commentaries
AB	Anchor Bible
ABRL	The Anchor Bible Reference Library
ACCS	Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture
AIL	Ancient Israel and Its Literature
ANE	Ancient Near East
ASV	American Standard Version
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BLS	Bible and Literature Series
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BA</i>	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BibInt	Biblical Interpretation Series
BETL	Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BDB	F. Brown, S.R. Driver, and C.A. Briggs. <i>A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907.
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
<i>CANE</i>	<i>Civilizations of the Ancient Near East</i> . Edited by Jack M. Sasson. 4 vols. New York, 1995. Repr. in 2 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006
CEB	Common English Bible
CEV	Contemporary English Version
<i>COS</i>	<i>Context of Scripture</i>
Deut	Deuteronomy
Dtr	Deuteronomist
DtrH	Deuteronomistic History
<i>Elr</i>	<i>Encyclopædia Iranica</i>
ESV	English Standard Version

Esth	Esther
Exod	Exodus
Ezek	Ezekiel
Ezr	Ezra
FCB	Feminist Companion to the Bible
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
Gen	Genesis
HMS	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HB	Hebrew Bible
HALOT	Köhler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, M. E. J Richardson, and Johann Jakob Stamm (eds.). <i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . [1st English Ed.] Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994.
<i>HUCA</i>	<i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>
HCOT	Historical Commentary on the Old Testament
IVBS	International Voices in Biblical Studies
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
Jer	Jeremiah
<i>JBR</i>	<i>Journal of Bible and Religion</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JCS</i>	<i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JNES</i>	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
Josh	Joshua
JSOT	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplemental Series
Judg	Judges
KJV	King James Version
Lev	Leviticus
LAI	Library of Ancient Israel
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
<i>MTSR</i>	<i>Method and Theory in the Study of Religion</i>
Neh	Nehemiah
NASB	New American Standard Version

<i>NIDB</i>	<i>New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i> . Edited by Katharine Doob Sakenfeld. 5 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 2006–2009.
NKJV	New King James Version
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
Num	Numbers
OTL	Old Testament Library
PRDtr	The person(s) who collected, adjusted, and inserted the Pilagshean Ribbon into the DtrH
PRDtrH	Pilagshean Ribbon within the Deuteronomistic History
PT	<i>Pîlegeš</i> Thread(s)
PTDtrH	Pilagshean Thread(s) within the Deuteronomistic History
PTGen	<i>Pîlegeš</i> Thread(s) within Genesis
LXX	Septuagint
SHBC	Smyth & Hewlys Bible Commentary
SBL	Society for Biblical Literature
Song	Song of Songs
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLStBL	Society of Biblical Literature Studies in Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
<i>TDOT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> . Edited by G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren. Translated by John T. Willis et al. 8 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–2006 [reprint 2011-].
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	Supplements to <i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WBC	<i>Women's Bible Commentary</i>
WBC	<i>Word Biblical Commentary</i>
Zech	Zechariah

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

STATING THE PROBLEM

When approaching the Hebrew text alongside English translations the word פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* appears ambiguous. In Hebrew it is an adjective or gerund that only appears in masculine form, but is most often translated as “concubine,” vulgarly understood to mean “female sex slave,” though by no means a dictionary definition for the word. It is a word used for females in a subordinate position, except when it isn't used for females or denoting a necessarily subordinate position. It is only used as a signifier of a sexual relationship, except when it isn't. The offspring of a person labeled as such are excluded from inheritance, except when they aren't; and its use is consistent across the whole HB, except that it isn't. My thesis in this work is that פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* is a word that began as a dehumanic and was eventually adopted by the people as an epithet.

This becomes clear when reader biases are stripped away concerning those labeled פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*. What follows is a meticulous and methodical study of the term פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* with the purpose of uncovering definitions for the word that are appropriate to the context of the texts in which it is found. The primary focus here is to define this term's use within the Deuteronomistic History (DtrH)/Former Prophets and retranslate and interpret these pericopes in light of the proposed definition. In order to perform this task to the best of my ability, I have applied non-binary hermeneutics and the study of dehumanics (both introduced and defined in chapter two) to the texts that house this term. Secondly, I do a shorter exegetical study of the intra-biblical passages in which פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* appears in order to show the etymology and development of the term outside of the DtrH.

The result being that the dehumanic פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*, should be roughly translated as “savage” or “barbarian” in its earliest appearances;¹ as the demonym Pilagshean in the Former Prophets, Song of Songs, and Esther; and finally, as concubine in the Chronicles. Initially this dehumanic, was applied to the indigenous populations of the western and southern Levant by the migrating Babylonian Jewish community. It was appropriated by the Persian Period indigenous population of Yehud for self-identification, then went out of use for a period of time. Diachronically its last use in the Hebrew Bible (HB) appears in Chronicles, wherein “concubine” is a legitimate translation of the term.

HISTORY OF BIBLICAL SCHOLARSHIP

While this dissertation, does address every occurrence of the term in the HB, my primary concern is its use within the DtrH and the history of scholarship reflects this focus. There are five threads associated with the DtrH Pilagshean Ribbon (PRDtrH - specifically in Judges through Kings). Not all scholars treat the term with the same amount of regard. Some scholars lump them together with the אִשָּׁה/*iššāh*; some scholars translate פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* as "concubine" or "secondary wife" without extended discussion of פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*; and some scholars offer analysis of the word. In the first two instances presumptions trumped curiosity leaving פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* unaddressed. The latter treatment offers examples of how several scholars have given varying degrees of attention to the mystery surrounding the term פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* including the social implications of the position it is thought to represent. Each of these scholars specialize in certain criticisms;

¹ Barbarian: defined by James C. Scott, "'barbarian' and its many cousins – 'savage,' 'wild,' 'raw,' 'forest people,' 'hill people' – are terms invented in state centers to describe and stigmatize those who had not yet become state subjects." Scott, *Against the Grain*, 221. In its use in the biblical texts, it carries the meaning “un-genealogize.”

Savage: “not domesticated or under control ... lacking the restraints normal to civilized human beings,” <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/savage>.

however, their preferred forms of criticism have not necessarily informed their discussion of פִּילְגֵשׁ/*pîlegeš*. Therefore, this section of the history of scholarship will be organized by treatment of subject rather than criticism style. As the word occurs only thirty-five times throughout the HB, in this review of literature, I will address the treatment of פִּילְגֵשׁ/*pîlegeš* across the whole HB though the study of its occurrences in the DtrH will be the primary focus.

Discussion of the term פִּילְגֵשׁ/*pîlegeš* can be broken down into three general categories: 1) scholars who deal with the texts in which פִּילְגֵשׁ/*pîlegeš* is used, but do not address the word at all; 2) scholars who translate the word as “concubine” or “secondary wife” with little to no additional discussion; and 3) scholars who discuss פִּילְגֵשׁ/*pîlegeš* with an attempt to define and/or understand the term, its origin, and/or its use.

TREATMENT OF THE LEXEME פִּילְגֵשׁ/*PÎLEGESĖ*

Concerning the scholarship around on the פִּילְגֵשִׁים/*pîlagšîm* of the DtrH. The term occurs twenty-two times in twenty-one verses in Judges – Kings. Scholarship on the word ranges from nonexistent or tertiary treatment of the term to serious attempts to define it (though not often as a study of its own). Generally, the term is addressed within a larger context (a biblical book commentary or an exegetical treatment of a whole pericope) and so dealing with the term is part of the exercise, not the purpose of it. On rare occasions, the term has been the focus of the research. What follows is an attempt to summarize the treatment of the term in the scholarship of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

Scholars Who Do Not Mention פִּילְגֵשׁ/*Pîlegeš*

The lack of addressing of the term specifically appears to happen most often when key passages are discussed in regard to larger concepts, when the discussion of the term would be a distraction from the thesis. Many experts who deal in the redaction of the DtrH have addressed passages and verses that contain the term, but merely reference the verse without discussion of any particularities.² Due to the significance of his work in Redaction Criticism on the DtrH, I will use Martin Noth as an example of this.³ In his work on exploring the distinct connections of Deuteronomy through Kings, Noth touches on three of the texts that are in focus here: Judges 17-21, 2 Samuel 21, and 1 Kings 11. The former passages only make it into footnotes each discussed as later additions to the original DtrH.⁴ In the latter passage Noth is concerned with the apostasy of Solomon through the foreign wives, and does not mention the פִּילגֶשִׁים/*pîlagšîm*. There are also several instances of commentaries in which the verses that contain פִּילגֶשִׁים/*pîlegeš* are exegeted, but no attention is given to the term פִּילגֶשִׁים/*pîlegeš*.⁵

² Though the principle term under inspection here is absent from these references, they end up being useful for the purpose of this study shedding light on the possible date of incorporation of the PTDtrH into the DtrH. Martin Noth, *The Deuteronomistic History*, JSOT Supplement Series, 15 (Sheffield, UK: University of Sheffield, Dept. of Biblical Studies, 1981); A. D. H. Mayes, *The Story of Israel between Settlement and Exile* (London: SCM, 1983); Brian Peckham, *The Composition of the Deuteronomistic History*, HSM, 35 (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1985); Mark A. O'Brien, *The Deuteronomistic History Hypothesis: A Reassessment*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis, 92 (Freiburg, Schweiz: Universitätsverlag, 1989); Anthony F. Campbell, "Martin Noth and the Deuteronomistic History," in *The History of Israel's Traditions: The Heritage of Martin Noth*, Steven L. McKenzie and M. Patrick Graham, eds., JSOTSup, 182 (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994); O'Brien, "Judges and the Deuteronomistic History," in *The History of Israel's Traditions*, McKenzie and Graham, eds.; Steven L. McKenzie, "The Divided Kingdom," in *The Future of the Deuteronomistic History*, Thomas Römer, ed. BETL, 147 (Leuven-Louvain: Leuven University Press, 2000); Hartmut N. Rösel, "Does a Comprehensive 'Leitmotiv' Exist in the Deuteronomistic History?" in *Future of the DtrH*, Römer, ed.; Raymond F. Person Jr., *The Deuteronomic School: History, Social Setting, and Literature*, SBLStBL, 2. (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2002); fn. Adam Klaus-Peter, "What Made the Books of Samuel Authoritative in the Discourses of the Persian Period? Reflections on the Legal Discourse in 2 Samuel 14," in *Deuteronomy-Kings as Emerging Authoritative Books: A Conversation*, Diana Vikander Edelman ed., Ancient Near East Monographs = Monografías Sobre El Antiguo Cercano Oriente, 6 (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2014).

³ His and other redaction critics' work on these chapters will be addressed in chapter 4.

⁴ Noth, *The DtrH*, 45, 119n; 55, 125n.

⁵ These resources tend to offer little to no enlightenment to the defining of פִּילגֶשִׁים/*pîlegeš*. A. D. H. Mayes, *Israel in the Period of the Judges*, SBT 2d Ser., 29 (Naperville, Ill: A.R. Allenson, 1974); Richard D. Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, IBC (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987); Thomas Römer, *The So-Called Deuteronomistic History*:

Scholars Who Mention פִּילֵגֶשׁ/*Pilegeš*, with Little to No Treatment

There are numerous scholars who not only reference the texts but also offer small synopses of the passage and must therefore translate פִּילֵגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*. In some cases, the authors simply chose a translation "concubine," "secondary wife," or (very rarely) "wife" without any discussion of the Hebrew term.⁶ Still, other scholars add a little explanation for their choice of

A Sociological, Historical, and Literary Introduction (London: T & T Clark, 2005); Brian Neil Peterson, *The Authors of the Deuteronomistic History: Locating a Tradition of Ancient Israel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014); Karla G. Bohmbach, "Conventions/Contraventions: The Meanings of Public and Private for the Judges 19 Concubine," *JSOT* 24, no. 83 (June 1999), <https://search-ebscohost-com.fuller.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lsdar&AN=ATLA0000987295&site=ehost-live>; Christopher T. Begg, "The Retellings of the Story of Judges 19 by Pseudo-Philo and Josephus: A Comparison," *Estudios Biblicos* 58, no. 1 (2000), <https://search-ebscohost-com.fuller.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lsdar&AN=ATLA0001283390&site=ehost-live>.

⁶ Concubine (s): Robert G. Boling, ed. *Judges*, AB 6a (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975); Antony F. Campbell and Mark A. O'Brien, *Unfolding the Deuteronomistic History: Origins, Upgrades, Present Text* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000); Mordechai Cogan, *I Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 10 (New York: Doubleday, 2001); fn. Jeffrey C. Geoghegan, *The Time, Place, and Purpose of the Deuteronomistic History: The Evidence of "until This Day,"* BJS 347 (Providence, RI: Brown Judaic Studies, 2006), ##; Marvin A. Sweeney, *I & II Kings: A Commentary*, OTL (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013); Yairah Amit, "Who Was Interested in the Book of Judges in the Persian-Hellenistic Periods?" in *Deuteronomy-Kings*, Edelman, ed., 103–14; Susanne Gillmayr-Bucher, "Memories Laid to Rest: The Book of Judges in the Persian Period," in *Deuteronomy-Kings*, Edelman, ed. 115–32; Ernest W. Nicholson, *Deuteronomy and the Judaeon Diaspora* (Oxford, Eng: Oxford University Press, 2014); Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis*, IBC (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982); A. A. Anderson, *2 Samuel*, WBC 11 (Dallas, TX.: Word Books, 1989); Jo Ann Hackett, "1 and 2 Samuel," *WBC*, expanded ed., Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe eds. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998); Trent C. Butler, *Judges*, WBC 8 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009); Carolyn J. Sharp, "Character, Conflict, and Covenant in Israel's Origin Traditions," in *The Hebrew Bible: Feminist and Intersectional Perspectives*, Gale A. Yee ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press. 2018), 41–71; Vanessa Lovelace, "Intersections of Ethnicity, Gender, Sexuality, and Nation," *The Hebrew Bible*, Gale A. Yee, ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press. 2018), 75–104.

Secondary wife: Victor Harold Matthews refers to the פִּילֵגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* as a 'concubine,' but defines the position as 'secondary wife,' *Judges and Ruth*, New Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

Wife: Isle Müllner refers to the woman in Judg 19 as wife and פִּילֵגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*, "Lethal Differences," in *A Feminist Companion to Judges*, FCB, 4, Athalya Brenner ed. (Sheffield: JSOT, 1994), 133; Mary E. Mills, *Joshua to Kings: History, Story, Theology*, T & T Clark Approaches to Biblical Studies (London: T & T Clark, 2016).

Woman: Judy Fentress-Williams and Melody D. Knowles deal with Esther here and not the DtrH; however, their choice to use the term woman as the translation for פִּילֵגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* is noteworthy, "Affirming and Contradicting Gender Stereotypes," *The Hebrew Bible*, Yee ed., 142.

Pilegesh/פִּילֵגֶשׁ: Alice Bach, "Rereading the Body Politic," in *A Feminist Companion to Judges*. Athalya Brenner ed., FCB, 4 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1994), 144; Janelle Stanley, "Judg 19: Text of Trauma," in *Joshua and Judges*, Athalya Brenner and Gale A. Yee, eds., *Texts @ Contexts* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013); Susan Ackerman, "The Women of the Bible and of Ancient Near Eastern Myth: The Case of the Levite's פִּילֵגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*," in

translation or a notation of the underlying Hebrew term, but do not tarry for an extensive discussion.⁷ Yet, significant insights can be gleaned from how those scholars who deal with the narrative threads and will be detailed in chapters three and four as appropriate.

Deep Exploration of פִּילְגֶשׁ/*Pîlegeš*

In the last thirty years many scholars have at times translated פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* as "concubine" or "secondary wife" and some leave the word untranslated. There are those who research and report what others have uncovered, and who then chose a translation or transliteration/Hebrew word based on that scholarship.⁸ Among those scholars who delve into and report on what has been written of פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* in order to define the term, there are many who add to the discourse as follows.

In 1974 C. Rabin offered an explanation for the origin פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš*. As many before and after him (including myself), Rabin begins with noting the non-Semitic character of the word and

Worship, Women, and War: Essays in Honor of Susan Niditch, John J. Collins. ed., BJS 357 (Providence, RI: Brown University, 2015), 215-225.

⁷ Concubine: Mignon R. Jacobs, *Gender, Power, and Persuasion: The Genesis Narratives and Contemporary Portraits* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 144-145.

Secondary/second degree wife: J. Alberto Soggin, *Le Livre des Juges*. Commentaire de L'ancien Testament, 5b (Geneve: Labor Et Fides, 1987); Athalya Brenner, "Women Frame the Book of Judges," in *Joshua and Judges*, Athalya Brenner and Gale A. Yee eds.

Pîlegesh/פִּילְגֶשׁ: Leah Rediger Schulte, *The Absence of God in Biblical Rape Narratives*, Emerging Scholars (Minneapolis Minnesota: Fortress Press, 2017).

Woman: Danna Nolan Fewell, "Judges," in *WBC*, expanded ed., Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe eds. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 81.

⁸ Concubine: Ken Stone, *Sex, Honor and Power in the Deuteronomistic History*, JSOTSup 234 (Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1996).

Secondary Wife: Butler, *Judges*.

Pîlegeš/פִּילְגֶשׁ: Renate Jost, *Gender, Sexualität, und Macht in der Anthropologie des Richterbuches*, Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament 9, no. 4 = Der Ganzen Sammlung Heft 164 (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2006); Susanne Gillmayr-Bucher, *Erzählte Welten Im Richterbuch: Narratologische Aspekte Eines Polyphonen Diskurses*, BibInt, 116 (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

cites the potential Greek and Latin cognate terms; he acknowledges the misguided attempt to associate the term as borrowed from the Hittite, and walks down an interesting rabbit trail regarding the Avestan/Old Iranian and other Indo-European terms that likely developed through lingual borrowing from this term; he also addresses the Aramaic, Arabic, and Syriac translations of the Hebrew text.⁹ Rabin's detailed description of each use as it was preserved in multiple manuscripts and translations as well as his choice to not hypothesize on the potential social position of the פִּלְגֶשֶׁם/*pîlagšîm* set his discussion apart from others. Rabin also gives a decisive explanation of why this term is not accepted as a Hebrew/Semitic term, he notes, " ... no other Semitic language has either a word resembling פִּלְגֶשֶׁם/*pîlegeš* phonetically and of the same or similar meaning, or else a word meaning 'concubine' and built on a semantic basis like that implied in the etymology suggested. Arabic dictionaries give for 'concubine' *haziyya* or *mahziyya* 'one who find favor', or *surriyya* from *surr*, 'joy'."¹⁰ His conclusion is that the term is an archaic one borrowed Indo-European word from Philistine meaning "concubine." He supports this conclusion noting a geographical pattern specifically found in Judges, Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles that links the פִּלְגֶשֶׁם/*pîlegeš* to the tribes of Benjamin and Judah, which were closest to Philistine.¹¹

There are many scholars who have attempted to define פִּלְגֶשֶׁם/*pîlegeš*. Lillian R. Klein, in her 1988 book *Triumph of the Irony in the Book of Judges*, notes the distinctions between

⁹ C. Rabin, "The Origin of the Hebrew Word *Pîlegeš*," JJS 25, no. 3 (1974), 353-357. Though not specifically defined, one can extrapolate a definition for "concubine" from his article: A likely purchased woman who is not the first wife of a man, 363-364. Further extrapolation leads to a definition for פִּלְגֶשֶׁם/*pîlegeš*: a woman who holds the position of concubine specifically in Philistine and in the tribes of Benjamin and Judah, 361-362.

¹⁰ Rabin, "*Pîlegeš*," 357.

¹¹ Rabin, "*Pîlegeš*," 359-361. Much to his credit, Rabin acknowledges that more than half of the biblical uses of the term do not fit in this pattern as well as the fact that Delilah is not called a פִּלְגֶשֶׁם/*pîlegeš* despite being a Philistine and being Samson's second woman, 361-364.

אִשָּׁה/’iššâ (wife), פִּילְגֶשׁ/pîlegeš (concubine), and צָרָה/ṭarâ (female adversary, rival). In the tale of the פִּילְגֶשׁ/pîlegeš in Judges 19 she refers to the woman as a wife and a concubine. Klein looks to its usage elsewhere in the Bible to clarify the social standing of a פִּילְגֶשׁ/pîlegeš. According to Klein concubines did not name the children (a right reserved for a wife), at times they were named when wives were not (possibly displaying a place of privilege), the children of wives and concubines had the same rights, and that the term פִּילְגֶשׁ/pîlegeš was never used to describe a bride of the deity.¹² She suggests that the פִּילְגֶשׁ/pîlegeš in Judges 19 was purchased by the Levite for "sexual gratification or housekeeping (or both), because he could not afford the bride price of a wife."¹³

In her extensive treatment of the term used to describe the woman of Judges 19, Mieke Bal offers a discussion of anthropological terms that would better explain the particular position of this woman in society. She settles on "*patrilocal* wife" defining it as, "a wife living in the house of the father, a wife who remains a daughter."¹⁴ Additionally, Bal works to break the reader from objectifying the woman in Judges 19 by naming her Beth (after "house" and her place of origin Bethlehem). In a later publication she suggests that "concubine," as the translation of פִּילְגֶשׁ/pîlegeš, is a mistake.¹⁵

¹² Lillian R. Klein, *The Triumph of Irony in the Book of Judges*, BLS 14 (Sheffield, UK: Almond Press, 1988), 162.

¹³ Klein, *The Triumph of Irony*, 162.

¹⁴ Bal notes that she is using an already used anthropological term but gave it a new definition with the defense that in this case to make reference to the woman's mother would betray the text (in that the woman's mother is completely absent). On the other hand, the father of the woman plays the significant role in determining her fate, which would be suggested by the use of the term *patrilocal* with this extended definition. *Death & Dissymmetry*, 85 and 89.

¹⁵ Mieke Bal, "A Body of Writings: Judges 19," in *A Feminist Companion to Judges*, Athalya Brenner ed. FCB, 4 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1993), 208 and 217.

Following Bal, Cheryl Exum names the פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* of Judges 19, but gives her the name Bath-sheber."¹⁶ She does not agree with Bal's use of *patrilocal wife* for פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*, as it cannot be applied to פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* in most instances. Rather, she chooses the translation "secondary wife." From her reading of Bal, Exum acknowledges that the term may have changed over time and that it is in need of further study.¹⁷

Susan Ackerman, in *Warrior, Dancer, Seductress, Queen: Women in Judges and Biblical Israel*, makes distinctions between the different פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*, depending on the text. In Judges 19 the woman is a secondary wife; however, she understands that a woman with this title might also be an independent mistress, using David's and Saul's פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* as examples.¹⁸

Recognizing פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* as other than concubine, Tammi Schneider devotes considerable time to the term. In her commentary on the Book of Judges, Schneider completely abandons the idea that a sufficient translation for פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* has been identified choosing instead to transliterate the term.¹⁹ This practice is continued in other works by Schneider and the practice is applied to Hebrew terms such as שִׁפְחָה/*šiphâ* and אִמָּה/*āmâ*, and to a lesser degree אִשָּׁה/*iššâ* for which she uses transliterations as well as the potential translations of "wife" and "woman" due to the ambiguity of the word.²⁰ In her work on Judges, Schneider uncovers a story arch concerning the treatment of women in ancient Israel. For Schneider, the primary female

¹⁶ From the Hebrew שֹׁבֵר - 'breaking' or 'fractured,' J. Cheryl Exum, *Fragmented Women: Feminist (sub)versions of Biblical Narratives*, Second ed. (London: T&T Clark, 2016), 140.

¹⁷ Exum, *Fragmented Women*, 141.

¹⁸ Susan Ackerman, *Warrior, Dancer, Seductress, Queen: Women in Judges and Biblical Israel*, ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 1998), 236.

¹⁹ Schneider, *Judges*, Berit Olam (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), xi.

²⁰ Tammi J. Schneider, *Mothers of Promise: Women in the Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2008), 20 and 108.

characters whose narratives open and close the Book of Judges, Achsah and the unnamed פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*, are not merely there as jewelry for the men in these stories; rather they are at the forefront in the display of the downward spiral of Israel:

... the image of a woman carrying out actions to accomplish her needed result begins on a positive note, with Achsah receiving the desired lands, but degenerates through the period so that the *pīlegeš*, who carried out many of the same actions, was raped and murdered.²¹

Schneider points out several narrative devices such as word play, similar and contrasting characters actions, and keywords that appear in both stories as support for this theme.²² In addition to the role the פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* plays in the thematic structure of the Book of Judges, Schneider addresses the issues surrounding the social standing of פִּילַגְשִׁים/*pīlagšîm*, which she suggests primarily concerns the inheritance rights of their children.²³

Much of twenty-first-century scholarship commonly recognizes the disservice of translating פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* only as "concubine." The movement away from this translation in late twentieth-century scholarship, noted above, is reflected in the reference materials published after the turn of the century and by the greater depth in which twenty-first century scholars are addressing the subject on its own or within their work on other related subjects.

²¹ Schneider, *Judges*, 17.

²² Schneider, *Judges*, 17 and 251. Ackerman and Klein also recognize a parallel of Achsah with the ending of the Book of Judges. However, they parallel her to the women of Shiloh, Ackerman, *Warrior, Dancer*, 291; Klein, *The Triumph of Irony*, 190.

²³ Schneider, *Judges*, 248. Though, she notes, as is the case with the ambiguous status and governing rules for פִּילַגְשִׁים/*pīlagšîm*, the inheritance rights are not clearly defined either. This point is made when one views the treatment of the women and children together as Schneider does. Schneider, *Judges*, 248-249, and 251. Cf. Schneider, "Bilhah," *Mothers*, 131-137. A major curiosity of Schneider's appears to be a question of who the authors/redactors of the biblical texts consider to be inheritance worthy and promise worthy children. These are not the same things as she notes that some children inherit but are not guaranteed to be full recipients of the promise, see *Mothers*, 62, 94, 137; and *Judges*, 248. Based on this work, one might come to the conclusion that the authors/redactors of the preserved text have a clear view of "appropriate lineage" for "promise" fulfillment, both patri- and matrilineal; the פִּילַגְשִׁים/*pīlagšîm* never fall into this category.

SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS

Chapter 2: Groundwork

Chapter two opens with a discussion of marriage and sexual roles along with familial relationships and inheritance in the HB and the Ancient Near East (ANE). This section deals with family relationships and by necessity terms used to describe females in the HB. I offer critical discussion on marriage institutions and laws of inheritance in the HB with focuses on אִשָּׁה/’iššâ, בַּעֲלָה/ ba ‘ălâ, customary and legal marriage, polygyny, פִּילְגֶשׁ/pîlegeš as familial relationship, and זִנָּה/zônâ.

The second section of the chapter contains the identification and naming of an hermeneutic and a field of study. I will attempt to describe this exegetical method that is in its infancy – non-binary hermeneutics – a practice of cherry-picking useful pieces of a variety of hermeneutics and methodologies combine with questioning assumptions and refusing to be tied down by the *rules* of a specific exegetical method. This methodology is not fully defined yet, and to it I add fields of study such as social psychology (specifically on motivations and human relationships), and dehumanics (a field I define and name here – though I do not claim to be its originator).

Chapter 3: The Lexeme: פִּילְגֶשׁ/Pîlegeš

There are two sections in chapter three. The first section is dedicated to a linguistic breakdown of פִּילְגֶשׁ/pîlegeš; its potential origins, and the semantics surrounding the term. The second section offers translations, notes, and a narrow commentary on all of the פִּילְגֶשׁ/pîlegeš passages in the HB outside of the DtrH. In order to lay bare the word I address its linguistic

make-up concerning the part of speech it is as well as gender and sex. Additionally, I question the insistence that it has a consistent meaning across the whole HB.

In the following section of chapter three, I take the reader through a diachronic exploration of its use throughout the HB. I begin with its origins as a dehumanic in Ezekiel, work through its appearance in Genesis (dealing with the texts in order of similarities to the Ezekiel passage), deal with the adaptation of the word for use in Esther and Song of Songs, ending on its appearances in Chronicles and its meaning there.

Chapter 4: Historical Context/Situation in Life

Uncovering the historical context of the Pilagshean Ribbon in the DtrH is no easy task. While DtrH scholars generally agree to the late insertion of these texts, that is not to say that there is an assumption that the texts were of late origination. I do not attempt to date the origins of the Pilagshean Threads within the Deuteronomistic History (PTDtrH) or the pericopes they were inserted into. Rather, in chapter four I describe the Persian Period background for the collecting of the regional history, followed by discussions on the formation of Israel, pre-exilic Judah, Judah after the fall of Israel through the exile, and exile through the Persian Period. The final section of chapter four deals with the formation of the DtrH.

Chapter 5: The Pilagshean Ribbon within the Deuteronomistic History

In chapter five I offer a synchronic exegetical study of each of the five PTDtrH. The five thread are: the Pilagshean in Shechem (Judg 8:31; 9:1, 3, and 18); the Pilagshean wife from Judah (Judg 19:1-29 and 20:4-6); Rizpah, daughter or Aiah (2 Sam. 3:7-11 and 21:8-14); the Pilagshean of Jerusalem (2 Sam. 5:13-16; 15:16; 16:21-22; 19:6 and 20:3); and the three hundred

Pilagshean (1 Kgs 11:3).²⁴ Each of the threads is translated with textual critical notes followed by interpretation. The interpretation in chapter five does not attempt to address the Persian Period context of the verses under scrutiny. Rather, I have worked to show how the texts can be read within their pericopes in order to highlight the adaptations of PRDtr in zir/their²⁵ attempt to weave the native populations stories into the national history.

In some cases, the Persian Period political or religious undertone in the text is too significant to ignore and will be addressed. However, the main purpose of chapter five is to offer a reading of each PTDtrH noting terminology, describing parallels between the individual threads (to show overarching themes), and to highlight intra-biblical textual parallels that underscore the reading of these passages as necessarily connected.

Chapter 6: Reading the Pilagshean Ribbon within the DtrH in its Postexilic Context

In the final exegetical chapter, chapter six, I offer an analysis of the Pilagshean Ribbon in light of the postexilic context of its insertion into the DtrH. This reading does not undermine existing interpretations of the text. Rather, this reading uncovers a hidden transcript²⁶ of the indigenous population of Yehud under Persian rule. In both the imperial and the subversive readings of the Pilagshean Ribbon with the Deuteronomistic History (PRDtrH), the ruling and elite tribes of Israel are portrayed as incompetent and corrupt. PRDtr simply interjects statements concerning the impact of migration and empire on the indigenous population into already

²⁴ I took special care to name these people, not as possessed, calling them by their geographical and family ties instead. The one exception is the wife from Judah, as she is most often not referred to as a wife despite the use of Hebrew construction [suffix] לְאִשָּׁה לְקַח // *lāqah li'ššā l[suffix]*, cf. “Marriage: ‘to take/give/be for a wife’ vs ‘marriage’” in Chapter 2, below.

²⁵ Third person singular neutered possessive pronoun.

²⁶ The hidden transcript are the actions and words that contravene the public transcript. These are specific to “a social site and to a particular set of actors,” it is “a whole range of practices” including speech, James C. Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*, (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1990), 14.

existing traditions. In this chapter additional areas of research will be applied to the text offering additional measures to understanding the motivations of PRDtr as well as members of the different segments of the population of Yehud. This will include terror management theory, discussions of class, group dynamics, colonizing tactics, migration theory, and indigenous studies.

CONCLUSION

The History of Biblical Scholarship was broken down into three sections on scholastic treatment of פִּילֵגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*. Concerning the first section, in which no treatment is given to the term, this might be attributed to the nature of these studies as big picture. To go into the weeds of one term would distract from the thesis. Noting that a scholar did not address the topic, in this case, is a statement concerning my diligence in reading all that I was able to on the subject at hand, even to the point of acknowledging those who have dealt in the particular texts under inspection, but not the term under inspection.²⁷

The scholars who give פִּילֵגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* a little treatment in some cases are traditionalists, not questioning “concubine” as the appropriate translation, while others rejected “concubine” opting for “secondary wife” or (rarely) “wife.” There were also a number of scholars who acknowledged the Hebrew term but did not expand on it. The works identified in this section were published between 1975 and 2018. It is important to underscore that the more recent publications did not ignore the deeper dialogue that has been written on the subject in the closing

²⁷ Considering DtrH is in the very title of this study, I feel I would have been remiss to not look into that branch of biblical scholarship.

of the twentieth-century and beginning of the twenty-first-century; rather, the term was not the primary focus of their work.

A considerable portion of this chapter was devoted to the deep investigations of multiple scholars from the late twentieth-century to present. These scholars have pushed the conversation around פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* forward in incredible ways. The linguistic and textual critical work of Rabin, Klein, Bal, Exum, and Ackerman brought the people labeled as פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* by the biblical authors out of the shadows shining light on their objectification and degraded positions. This was done in part by the choice to fully discuss the translation of the term, no longer simply accepting “concubine.” While some in this group continued the use of “concubine,” the new translation option, “secondary wife,” was introduced. In the introduction to her commentary on Judges, Schneider refused to accept that the term had been sufficiently explored and defined. She, therefore, transliterated the word, a practice followed by many today, including me.

What follows is the reading of an ancient text that houses a hidden transcript of a colonized and oppressed population. In working to define a single Hebrew term, an entire disappeared population is uncovered. The PRDtrH is a personal witness of the loss of a people’s freedom and homeland. The very nature of the discourse leads to the villainizing of the migrant population as being part of the colonizing machine of the empire. However, the plight of the migrant population should not be missed. They too represent an oppressed population. These are the mid-enfranchised. The Babylonian Jewish community were descendants of trauma – war, forced migration, enslavement, and assimilation. As is often the case of the disenfranchised, those who found themselves with an opportunity to rise from a lower position took it and unintentionally became oppressors. A distinct mark of the mid-enfranchised being that they remain in a position of oppression, never truly being free themselves. I note this as I recognize

that what follows, at times, villainizes the migrant Babylonian Jewish population. This is merely a report of the indigenous perspective and in no way a claim to an absolute reality.

NOTES FOR READING:

In the writing of this dissertation, I have spent a tremendous amount of time counting how words and phrases are used throughout the HB. In some cases, this means I have compared the Hebrew to multiple English translations and give an account of how the terms under review were commonly translated into English. In some instances, I deal with how the words or phrases are used in the Hebrew text and offer both broad and specific explanations of how the terms in question can be understood. I use precise counts throughout. For example: I note, “*יִשְׁשָׁא* / *iššâ* appears 781 times in 686 verses; *יִשְׁשָׁא* / *iššâ* + suffix appears 170 times in 159 verse”²⁸ these numbers come from searches through Accordance Bible Software. I also use precise numbers when I have sifted through the data and found there are only a few instances of a word or phrase used in a particular way, as in: “there are four instances in which the possessive is missing ... all cases in which the women came from questionable tribes/families and therefore may not have been considered acceptable as ‘wives.’”²⁹

Where less precise data is given, it is based on personal counting. Though I have in fact counted each and every use being describe, at least three times, I have chosen to represent this data in fractions (acting as approximations), rather than precise numbers in order to keep from getting bogged down by the fear of offering incorrect information. There are statements such as:

²⁸ Cf. Glossary, 177.

²⁹ Cf. Chapter 5, subsection “The Pilagshean of Jerusalem.”

“three quarters of those occurrences exist to explicitly identify male possession of women.”³⁰

The purpose is to highlight trends not to give an exact accounting of every use of a word or phrase that may seem significant. Most often, where word counting exists there is a blend of precise counts with approximations with the hope to show the breadth of the study and zero in on a particular point. I recognize that I may have miscounted give or take a few. I am confident that miscounts are rare and do not occur when discussing terms and phrases with results under ten.

A considerable portion of this work is spent redefining Hebrew terms. Each Hebrew term that is redefined here may be found in the glossary with a full definition, citation, and explanation for the new definition. The transliterated form of the word with the definition is intermingled with English terms; there is also a Hebrew glossary with the terms in *Alephbet* order. As this research is entirely about defining words, I have found that some English words have flexible or alternative definitions; there are some terms and phrases that are uncommon; and on a few occasions, I have found the English language lacks terms that accurately describe a concept under discussion. In the first two instances I will define the term or phrase in the text with the citation. In the latter instance, I describe the concept and offer a new term with a working definition. All English terms defined or introduced in the text, will have entries in the glossary.

³⁰ Cf. Chapter 2, subsection “Marriage.”

CHAPTER 2

GROUNDWORK

MARRIAGE INSTITUTIONS AND LAWS OF INHERITANCE IN THE HEBREW BIBLE

From its institution, פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* was tied up in relational considerations. In a majority of these cases, the sexual relationship appears to be primary.¹ As witnessed above, scholarship on the subject presumes sexual ownership, which is equated to some form of marriage. And, while contemporary readers may be tempted to view marriage as a romantic endeavor, for the greater part of human history marriage existed to regulate property through inheritance. In the ANE marriage was an institution that was “both social and legal, understood and enforced differently by different groups in different contexts.”²

אִשָּׁה/’*iššâ*, בַּעֲלָה/*Ba’ălâ*

In the biblical text, women are given many titles that denote their social position. The word אִשָּׁה/’*iššâ* means "woman" and under certain circumstances "wife."³ The title of "wife" is also applied to women labeled as אִמָּה/’*amâ*, שִׁפְחָה/*šiphâ*, נַעֲרָה/*na’arâh*, בַּעֲלָה/*ba’ălâ*.⁴ There are no biblical laws that offer explicit requirements for procuring a wife. In addition to "[verb] for a wife for [noun/pronoun]" the terms בַּעַל/*ba’al* n. "lord" v. "to lord" and בַּעֲלָה/*ba’ălâ* n.f. "larded

¹ This will be explored in greater depth in the coming chapters.

² Bernard S. Jackson, “The ‘Institutions’ of Marriage and Divorce in the Hebrew Bible,” *JSS* 56, no. 2 (2011): doi:10.1093/jss/fgr002, 222.

³ This word will be translated as a woman whenever it is in absolute form without a possessive marker. In cases where there is a pronominal possessive suffix on אִשָּׁה/’*iššâ* it will be translated as wife; additionally, in cases where the preposition ל/with a pronominal suffix or proper name is used to describe possession concerning אִשָּׁה/’*iššâ* it will be translated as wife. For additional details see glossary footnote for אִשָּׁה/’*iššâ*. The use of אִשָּׁה/’*iššâ* with the preposition ל/ is discussed more below.

⁴ פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* is pointedly absent in this list, as scholarship on the term was discussed earlier in the chapter. It will be tertiary noted in this section, as greater attention will be given to it in chapters three and four.

over," are used to express the relationship between some men and women⁵ and have been translated as "husband," "wife," and the verbal form "to marry."⁶ In at least one account, custom suggests a wife determined whether or not she accompanied her husband out of her father's house.⁷ However, according to the Deuteronomist (Dtr), a raped woman who was taken or given as a wife had no possibility of divorce.⁸ These terms of possession were explicitly intended to govern sexuality and household boundaries for the purpose of inheritance rights of the children.⁹

Marriage: "to take/give/be for a wife" vs "marriage"

Inger Ljung points out, in the texts of Ancient Israel, "marriage legislation is not so detailed as that of many other peoples;" the legislation that does exist seems to be concerned with who a woman can be joined to.¹⁰ As Ljung notes, women were property; therefore, there are lists of people groups that are banned from sexual relations as well as familial relations (mother, sister, aunt, step/half-sisters), not out of concern for genetic problems, but due to the woman's existence as property of a man.¹¹ Jon L. Berquist summarizes the construct of "marriage" as it is

⁵ Berquist, *Controlling Corporeality*, 62; Cf. Deut 24, and "בעל/ba 'al" and "בעלה/ba 'ālā" in the glossary.

⁶ HALOT: בעל I, בעל I, בעלה

⁷ This is apparent in Jacob's requesting that Leah and Rachel go with him when he leaves Laban in Genesis 31. Though there is a question concerning Jacob's status – Laban potentially sees him as a debt-slave (Exod 21:4) – his wives clearly have a choice in whether or not to follow him, Jackson, "Institutions," 229.

⁸ Jackson, "Institutions," 232. The law codes treat the father slightly differently, but the fate of the woman is sealed by the men in both cases. Exodus 22:16-17 allows for the father to refuse to give his daughter to the perpetrator and does not have a clause disallowing divorce. Deut 22:28-29 requires that the woman be taken by the rapist without the possibility of divorce.

⁹ Cf. Douglas A. Knight, *Law, Power, and Justice in Ancient Israel*, LAI (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 131-135.

¹⁰ *Silence or Suppression: Attitudes Towards Women in the Old Testament*, Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. Uppsala Women's Studies. A, Women in Religion 2 (Uppsala: Publisher Not Identified, 1989), 34-35.

¹¹ *Silence or Suppression*, 35.

described in the HB: there was a sexual bond expressed as לקח לאשה/lāqah l'iššā "to take for a wife" but no language expressly describing "marriage."¹² While there may not be language that expressly describes it, there is a tremendous amount of language within the HB that provides the expectation of exclusive possession of women for sex and procreation. The Hebrew construction לקח לאשה/l'iššā occurs eighty-five times in eighty-three verses. Three quarters of those occurrences exist to explicitly identify male possession of women.¹³ This is done in two ways: in conjunction with possessives,¹⁴ and through the use of verbs.¹⁵ This does not include the multitude of cases in which לקח לאשה/l'iššā is used without the preposition ל/l to describe possession of women (discussed more fully below). While it is true that no Hebrew term for marriage or wife exists, the language makes room for distinction between a woman, an owned woman, and levels of sexual partnership (which include varying legal and customary rights for property and inheritance). There are also a handful of Akkadian, Ugaritic, and Aramaic loanwords and cognates that describe coupling or

T.M. Lemos argues that the terms "property" and "chattel" do not accurately describe the social positions of wives in ancient Israel, distinguishing them from slaves. Yet, Lemos does recognize a hierarchical system in which wives were subordinate to husbands, "Were Ancient Israelite Women Chattel? Shedding a New Light on an Old Question," in *Worship, Women, and War: Essays in Honor of Susan Niditch*, John J. Collins. ed., BJS 357 (Providence, RI: Brown University, 2015), 241.

¹² *Controlling Corporeality: The Body and the Household in Ancient Israel* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 62. It is significant to underscore that this is pointedly different than לקח לאשה/lāqah l'iššā which will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 5 in the thread concerning the פלגשים/pīlagšīm of Jerusalem.

¹³ A quarter of the time the preposition in לקח לאשה/l'iššā is accusative or dative with the remaining three-quarters acting as possessive. Though nearly half of the accusative and dative uses include a possessive suffix so that the woman being referenced is understood to be possessed.

¹⁴ With a pronominal suffix one-quarter of the time; and the remainder being associated with ל+pronominal suffix or noun. Nearly every case the possessive is in conjunction with a verb.

¹⁵ לקח/lāqah "to take" one-third; נתן/nātan "to give" one-third; היה/hāyah "to be" one-quarter (with several additional instances of overlap with לקח/lāqah); in a few instances of other verbs are used to describe the possession (אָרשׁ/āraš, "to betroth;" אָספּ/āsap "to gather;" and קָנָה/qānat "to purchase"). Nearly every case a verb is used in conjunction with the possessive.

aspects of coupling.¹⁶ Not to mention the numerous occasions in which the text makes clear that a woman can only be possessed by one man at a time. This all exists as evidence that some system(s) of marriage existed throughout Israel and Judah's history. However, it would be an injustice to the text to presume that marriage in ancient Israel/Judah/Yehud looked anything like marriages of the global north of the twentieth-century.

Though never outright stated in the biblical text, a review of the biblical literature gives evidence for two types of marriages: 1) one of custom, in which a man "takes" or "is given" a woman, or a woman "becomes" "for a wife;" 2) one of law or contract in which there is ceremony surrounding the coupling process.¹⁷ These are not always easy to distinguish from each other; rather, clues within the text point to the differences. For the purpose of brevity, I will only mention a few such examples from the DtrH. The coupling process is not the sole difference between the two; there is also distinction in how relationships are severed. In the first a man could simply "send/drive out" שלח/šālah the woman (cf. Gen 21:14), in that latter a "divorce decree" כר(י)ת(kērītūt) was necessary "to send/drive out" שלח/šālah the woman (Deut 24:1 and 3).

As noted by both Berquist and Ljung, sexuality was used for procreation¹⁸ and the primary purpose of legislation of sexuality was to control the boundaries of the household.¹⁹

¹⁶ Cf. ארש/āraś, חתן/hātan, חתונה/hāṭunnā, חרף/hārap, יבם/yābam, מאמר/ma'āmār. The majority of these terms never appear in the Josh-Kgs.

¹⁷ More broadly examples of custom or tribal marriages may be seen in the cases in which an אמה/āmā (Ex 21:8-10) or שפחה/šiphā (Gen 16:3; 30:4 and 9) becomes a wife, or when a woman becomes a wife without defined terms (e.g.: of Esau: 26:34; 28:8; 36:2; of Joseph: 41:45; of Moses Ex 2:21 [given] & 4:20 and 18:2 [referred to as wife]).

¹⁸ Berquist, *Controlling Corporeality*, 65; Ljung, *Silence and Suppression*, 35.

¹⁹ Berquist, *Controlling Corporeality*, 65-66.

There are narratives and laws concerning unsanctioned sexual contact²⁰ that both imply and outright state that the woman is to be purchased from the father (cf. Gen 34, Ex 22:15, and Deut 22:28-29),²¹ as pregnancy put her life at risk and if she lived through the pregnancy her child would be a pollution of the household.²² In either case she would be a missed resource in the household, due to death or "marriage" and the household loss needed to be compensated.²³

Governing the sexuality of women through restrictive legislation developed over centuries and was the result of multiple forces²⁴ rarely looking the same from one moment to the next. Though there seems to be *extensive* coverage concerning sexuality in the biblical law (cf. Exod 21 and

²⁰ In some cases this is rape (cf. Gen 34:2), while ambiguity concerning the choice of the woman is implied in other instances (cf. Deut 22:22-29). There are numerous scholars who have dedicated a great amount of time in distinguishing when sexual contact should be understood as rape. To do so here would be a distraction. For work on rape in the HB see Schulte, *The Absence of God*; Alice A Keefe, "Rapes of Women/Wars of Men," *Women, War, and Metaphor: Language and Society in the Study of the Hebrew Bible*, Claudia V. Camp and Carole R. Fontaine eds., Semeia 61. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993; Phyllis Trible, *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives*, Overtures to Biblical Theology 13 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), chapters 2 and 3; Schneider, *Judges*, 261 and 283; Exum, *Fragmented Women*, chapter 6.

²¹ Jackson, uses the term "dowry," and discusses it in terms of purchasing not necessarily in terms of coupling or mating, "Institutions," 236-37.

²² Berquist, *Controlling Corporeality*, 67.

²³ Berquist, *Family and Household in Ancient Israel* (Claremont School of Theology Course THB4058: Claremont, CA, Fall 2017).

²⁴ This includes: 1) Domesticating survival patterns – Carol Meyers, "The Roots of Restriction: Women in Early Israel." *BA* 4, no. 3 (1978). 91-103. <http://www.jstore.org/stable/3209454>; 2) empirical/monarchical embedding of patriarchy – though Gale A. Yee does not use this terminology. However, her discussion of the diminishing of the woman's social role in order to shift the attention from the monarchy, who lowered the status of the peasant, by creating conflict within the domestic space in "Gender, Class, and the Social-Scientific Study of Genesis 2-3," is similar to what is described by Samson and Gigoux, *Semeia* 87 (1999), 177–92. <https://search-ebscohost-com.fuller.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lsdar&AN=ATLA0000009665&site=ehost-live>, 177 and 189. Cf. Colin Samson, and Carlos Gigoux, *Indigenous Peoples and Colonialism: Global Perspectives* (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2016), discussed below in the methodology section; 3) appropriation of neighboring laws and customs – the "appropriation" of neighboring laws and customs is so pervasive in ancient Israel, that there are numerous commands against intermarriage (this is a common theme in the DtrH and Ezra-Nehemiah) see Ljung, *Silence and Suppression*, 61-69. Yet, instances of "foreign" social and cultic practices are also common, cf. Samuel Greengus, "Sisterhood Adoption at Nuzi and the "wife-Sister" in Genesis." *HUCA* 46 (1975): 5-31; Jonathan Paradise, "A Daughter and Her Father's Property at Nuzi." *JCS* 32, no. 4 (October 1980): 189-207; Schneider, *Judges*, 26; Susan Ackerman, "'And the Women Knead Dough': The Worship of the Queen of Heaven in Sixth-Century Judah," in *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel*, Peggy Lynne Day, ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1989); and Frank Moore Cross, *From Epic to Canon: History and Literature in Ancient Israel* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 74-83.

22, Deut 22, 24, Lev 18),²⁵ it would be a mistake to assume that these laws applied to the entire HB, across the whole history of the people represented in it. And in several cases, the biblical laws that do exist to govern coupling appear to be reactions to broken customs.²⁶

Polygyny

The practice of polygyny, here defined as “a marriage practice in which a man possesses two or more legally recognized wives,”²⁷ is found throughout the biblical text and the ANE. In a survey of Ugaritic administrative texts, Josué J. Justel found only one example of polygyny, though several texts made it clear that it was an accepted custom; he concludes, “as in other periods and regions of the ANE, it seems that at Ugarit polygyny was generally practiced only by persons of high social status.”²⁸ In the HB there are several examples of polygyny as a practiced custom²⁹ though the biblical law only addresses polygyny concerning slaves and kings.³⁰ In highlighting its existence to a pre-Israelite neighbor to Canaan it is apparent that polygyny had a long history across the region, albeit uncommon for those without money. Therefore, it would not have been viewed as an entirely foreign and imperial practice to the indigenous population of

²⁵ This is a very truncated list. For a full list of sexual legislation in the biblical law codes see Harold J. Ellens *Sex in the Bible: A New Consideration*, Psychology, Religion, and Spirituality (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006), 68; and Deborah L. Ellens, *Women in the Sex Texts of Leviticus and Deuteronomy: A Comparative Conceptual Analysis*, LHBOTS, 458 (New York: T & T Clark, 2008).

²⁶ Jackson, “Institutions,” 232-236.

²⁷ Josué J. Justel, “Is Polygyny Attested in the Administrative Texts from Ugarit?” *Ugarit-Forschungen*, 40 (Germany: Hubert Co., 2008), 445.

²⁸ Justel, “Polygyny,” 449-450.

²⁹ E.g. Gen 4:19; 16:3; 21:1-13; 25:1 and 6; 29:28; 30:4 and 9; Judg 8:29-30; 1 Sam 1:1-2; 2 Sam 5:13; 1 Kgs 11:3.

³⁰ Exod 21:10 and Deut 17:17. Arguably these laws show that polygyny was a practice of powerful men, slave owners, and kings.

Persian Period Yehud. This would have been key in acceptance of national origin stories that include polygyny (e.g. Abraham, Jacob/Israel, and David).

אמה/'*Amāh*, שפחה/*Šiphā*

While wives for the most part held subordinate positions to men³¹ not all the roles of women were equal. אמה/'*āmā*, never precisely defined in the HB, in Genesis it can refer to a "slave-wife," who was a wife's slave (שפחה/*šiphā*) given to her husband for the purpose of having children (Gen 21:10; 30:3; 31:33;), it is also the term used for a woman who is sold by her father for the purpose of being made a wife (Exod 21:7-11).³² The biblical text does not pointedly state that all אמה/'*āmā* are sexually obligated to a man; however, Berquist notes that a man had sexual rights over all "adult" women in his household.³³ Custom, as is described in Genesis, appear to permit wives to have a say in whether or not their husbands have access to their slaves (שפחה/*šiphā* or אמה/'*āmā*) and the offspring of such coupling is presumed to belong to the wife not the slave-wife (Gen 16:3; 30:4; 30:9). While an Israelite אמה/'*āmā* could leave her husband and return to her father's house if she did not feel adequately supported (Exod 21:7-11),³⁴ the rights of the שפחה/*šiphā* were not strictly stated in the narrative or law, leaving this woman at the mercy of the man or woman to whom she belonged (Gen 16:3; 30:4; 30:9).

³¹ Lemos, "Women Chattel?" 241.

³² In this instance a man can sell his daughter as an אמה/'*āmā*, "debt-slave," who is then afforded distinct protections. Shalom M. Paul, "Exod 21:10 a Threefold Maintenance Clause," *JNES* 28, no. 1 (1969): 48-49; cf. Jackson, "Institutions," 234-236

³³ Berquist, *Controlling Corporeality*, 85.

³⁴ Exod 21:10. Though it does not appear that she can leave without cause, nor is she given the choice of whether or not to follow her man, Jackson, "Institutions," 229-232.

As noted above, scholars often translate פִּילְגֵשׁ/*pîlegeš* as "secondary-wife" and concubine, therefore it will be included in this discussion of marriage and sexual legislation. According to Engelken, the authors and redactors of the HB "gave little thought to the legal and social position."³⁵ In the narrative texts an אִשָּׁה/*iššâ* or and אִמָּה/*āmâ* could be a פִּילְגֵשׁ/*pîlegeš*,³⁶ though it is rare.³⁷

Raymond Westbrook addresses the female slave in comparative ANE literature and law codes as well as the HB. In his chapter "The Female Slave," he makes a distinction between a free and slave concubine. When referencing the Laws of Hammurabi the distinction is not in the term used for the slave woman, but in regard to her being freed by her master. In the HB, however, he understands פִּילְגֵשׁ/*pîlegeš* as "free concubine" while the "slave concubine" is אִמָּה/*āmâ* or שִׁפְחָה/*šiphâ*. This seems to come specifically out of concern for Reuben's action "to lay" שָׁכַב/*šākab* with Bilhah, "if Bilhah were merely Jacob's slave concubine, there would have

³⁵ Engelken, "*Pilegesh*," *TDOT*, ed. G Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, trans. David E. Green (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), 550.

³⁶ Engelken, "*Pilegesh*," 550.

³⁷ Of the thirty-seven times the term is used in the HB, it is only used twice to describe a wife. Bilhah is a wife, an אִמָּה/*āmâ* and labeled as פִּילְגֵשׁ/*pîlegeš*; as is the woman in Judges 19.

been no breach of a sexual taboo at all,” this is based on Hittite Law 194.³⁸ However, this distinction does not hold up when the term is used elsewhere in the HB.³⁹

In the end, the codification of the sexual relationship between men and women was done in order to define inheritance rights. Westbrook addresses the children of the concubine in addition to male sexual rights over her. He highlights a Hittite Law that notes the children of a free or slave concubine have no rights of inheritance, as well as an Old Assyrian document which states the opposite.⁴⁰ The HB narrative and law texts give the greatest power concerning inheritance to the patriarch, with the greatest concern being that property stay within a tribe.

With the exception of its use in Chronicles it is improper to say that פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* definitively should be defined as a familial sexual position/role.⁴¹ Additionally, it is not codified in the sexual law texts of the HB. Rather, פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* is a word that was used by some authors

³⁸ Raymond Westbrook, “The Female Slave,” in *Gender and Law in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*. Victor Harold Matthews, Bernard M Levinson, and Tikva Simone Frymer-Kensky, eds., JSOTSup 262 (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 233; 221.

Hittite Law 194:

If a free man sleeps with slave women who have the same mother and their mother, it is not an offence. If brothers sleep with a free (woman), it is not an offence. If father and son sleep with the same female slave or prostitute, it is not an offence.

Harry A. Hoffner, Jr. trans, "Hittite Laws (2.19)," *The Context of Scripture*, William W Hallo, K. Lawson Younger, and David E Orton eds., (Leiden: Brill, 2003), Accordance electronic version, 118.

³⁹ See discussions below concerning the 10 Pilagshean women and Abishag. A second concern Westbrook has with distinguishing free concubines from slave concubines was that there would have been an awkwardness in legitimate heirs inheriting their siblings, “Female Slave,” 233. This is an anachronistic projection on Westbrook’s part.

⁴⁰ Westbrook, “Female Slave,” 220-223.

⁴¹ The Aramaic understanding of the term implies that this is not an acceptable contracted and good familial position, as is explained by Marcus Jastrow in the entry “פִּילֶגֶשׁ, פִּלְגֶשׁ”

concubine...the wife has a marriage contract securing a settlement for her (כתובה), the concubine has none; (oth. opin.)...the wife has a marriage contract containing besides the settlement all conditions of a marriage contract...the concubine has the contract but without the conditions a. fr. - בגבעה, v. פ' בגבעה...Snh. 21^a. Numeri Rabbah⁴¹ s. 9 (ref. to Cant VI,8) ...there are eighty families (nations) that know their mothers but not their fathers, and they are called 'concubines', for the concubines are suspected (of faithlessness).

the *Dictionary of Targumim. Talmud and Midrashic Literature*, (1926), 1177.

and redactors deliberately to undermine persons,⁴² and was later appropriated to name a social position/class. It is significant to underscore that the פִּילגְשִׁים/*pīlagšīm* did not have a clear heritage or “ethnicity” nor were there set rules for their inheritance rights.⁴³

זֹנָה/*Zōnā*⁴⁴

The literal and metaphorical uses of this term have been well documented in scholarship in the late twentieth-century.⁴⁵ The predominant contemporary translations are weighted and misogynistic. Such translations include "harlot" or "whore," "unfaithful," or presume to have a peculiar use.⁴⁶ Renate Jost, defines זֹנָה/*zōnā* as "die Alleinstehende" (the single woman) and "die

⁴² This will be fully explained in Chapters 3 and 4.

⁴³ פִּילגְשָׁה/*pīlegeš* is used for people in Egypt (Ezek 23), Edom (Gen 36), Shechem (Judg 8), and Judah (Judg 19).

Concerning inheritance: Bilhah's children were given an inheritance, while Abimelech, who was the son of a פִּילגְשָׁה/*pīlegeš*, is questioned concerning his authority to rule Israel. Each of these appearances of the term will be dealt with in more detail below.

⁴⁴ The noun occurs a total of thirty-four times in the HB, nine times in Deuteronomy – Kings (Deut 23:18; Josh 2:1; 6:17, 22, and 25; Judg 11:1 and 16:1; and 1 Kgs 3:16 and 22:38). Outside of the DtrH it is used in Genesis 34:31 and 38:15; Leviticus 21:7 and 14; twice in Isa, thrice in Jer; five times in Ezekiel (only in chapters 16 and 23); and once each in Hosea, Joel, Mic, and Nah. Of the Writings, it is only found in Prov, where it is used four times. The verb is used ninety-five times in the HB. Yet, it only appears two times in Deuteronomy and four times in the whole of the Former Prophets. The four latter occurrences are in Judges (2:17; 8:27 and 33; and 19:2). Thrice the verb is used to describe the tribes of Israel going to the deities of the locals. The last time it describes the actions of the פִּילגְשָׁה/*pīlegeš* in Judges 19.

⁴⁵ See Phyllis Bird, "'To Play the Harlot': An Inquiry into an Old Testament Metaphor," in *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel*, Peggy Lynne Day, ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1989).

⁴⁶ Exum suggests in the latter instance it means divorce (or at least sexual autonomy), *Fragmented Women*, 143. The LXX translates it as ὀργισθῆν/*ōrgisthē* with several following suit including HALOT. Bal suggests a multivalent explanation of the term in this instance meaning "unfaithful," but in two ways; unfaithful to family tradition by going to her husband as well as a perceived unfaithfulness to her new husband by returning to her father, *Death & Dissymmetry*, 89. Schneider also discusses the difficulty surrounding this term in Judges 19, preferring "fornicate" over "prostitute," she notes its previous metaphorical use in prior chapters concluding it "is almost irrelevant" whether or not the woman had sex with another man, she problematically did what was right in her own eyes, *Judges*, 251. Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner note in *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, that originally זֹנָה/*zānā* had the meaning "that a husband did not live in his wife's tribe," (J. E. Brill: 1953-1985) reprint edition used here: Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *A Bilingual Dictionary of the Hebrew and Aramaic Old Testament*, (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 261.

ungebundene Frau" (the unbound woman),⁴⁷ and Berquist offers the translations “business person,” “entrepreneur,” and even “sexy.”⁴⁸ The general biblical use of the word carries with it the idea that one is able to create without being attached: “to be free,” “unaffiliated,” “self-producer,” “fruitfully lord-less,” or “sexually active single person.”⁴⁹

*לחנה/*Lēhēnā*

There is an Aramaic term that appears twice in the Hebrew Bible, לחנה*/*lēhēnāh*, the definitions offered by HALOT are “concubine” (Daniel 5:2 and 23) and “to those women who destroy” (Proverbs 31:3) as a gerund. Pointedly, the Targum translates אמה/*āmā* and פילגש/*pīlegeš* to לחנה*/*lēhēnāh*. It is unclear if Daniel and Proverbs used this term in light of its Akkadian cognate “*alahhinatu* a woman who has duties in a session in the court of the queen”⁵⁰ or if, as Baumgartner suggests it carries a meaning of “prostitute,” from the Akkadian *lahannu* vessel.⁵¹ This is tertiary significant in light of the discussions on פילגש/*pīlegeš* and זונה/*zōnā* above.

(261 in 2001 reprinted edition). However, this origin was completely abandoned by their most recent collaboration, HALOT which suggests “to be unfaithful,” “commit fornication,” “to abandon someone to fornication,” and in one instance “to feel repugnance against.”

⁴⁷ *Gender, Sexualität, und Macht*, 296 and 300.

⁴⁸ Jon L. Berquist, private conversation.

⁴⁹ This is based on personal work in which I addressed every occurrence of the verb and noun in the HB, as well as a review of multiple lexicon and dictionary entries of the root from the last two centuries including BDB, HALOT, TDOT, Gesenius, and Ludwig Köhler and Walter Baumgartner, *A Bilingual Dictionary of the Hebrew and Aramaic Old Testament: English and German* (Leiden: Brill, 1998).

⁵⁰ HALOT, 1909; cf. AHw, 528a. Additionally, see CAD A: 1 294a “and *alahhinatu* a woman with an official position in the court of the queen.”

⁵¹ Baumgartner, ZAW 45 (1945), 90.

METHODOLOGY

TRADITIONAL AND NEW METHODOLOGIES

In coming to the texts and terms under study a variety of methodologies, theories, and disciplines were consulted. The foundations of this research reflect a traditional biblical studies twentieth-century education and therefore include textual, historical, literary, form, grammatical, tradition, and redaction criticisms. These criticisms find themselves intertwined, overlapping, and at odds with each other here. Therefore, the parts of each of these criticisms that is useful, was applied. The late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries have introduced new methodologies to biblical studies, many of which were indispensable in this research. These include social scientific methodologies, feminist hermeneutics, semiotics, and postcolonialism. These new methodologies are now known and defined.⁵² Biblical scholars such as Mieke Bal, Jon L. Berquist, Roland Boer, Claudia V. Camp; Norman K. Gottwald, Richard Horsley, Rainer Kessler, Douglas A. Knight, Paula McNutt, George E. Mendenhall, Carol Meyers, Susan Niditch, Thomas Römer, Susanne Schultz, and Gale A. Yee have worked extensively at integrating the social scientific fields of anthropology, communication studies, economics, human geography, political science, psychoanalytic theories, and sociology into the study of the biblical texts. These authors, among many others, were often referenced in preparation for this work. Feminist hermeneutics, including womanist hermeneutics, and gender and sexuality studies, have moved from the edges to mainstream hermeneutics through the tireless work of Cheryl B. Anderson, Athalya Brenner, Gay Byron, Cheryl Exum, Peggy Lynne Day, Phyllis Bird, Wilda C. Gafney, Stuart Macwilliam, Carol Meyers, Tammi Schneider, and Phyllis Trible.

⁵² Many scholars listed here work with multiple methods. In many cases one piece of scholarship employs multiple methodologies. However, for brevity's sake, each scholar will only be noted under one field of study here.

Historiography and folklore studies have opened biblical scholarship to the questions around semiotics and meaning making and their role in biblical composition with the work of Hans M. Barstad, Frank Moore Cross, Albert de Pury, Victor H. Matthews, and Steven L. McKenzie. Postcolonialism has been applied to biblical studies by R.S. Sugirtharajah, Uriah Y. Kim, and Jeffrey Kah-Jin Kuan, Jon L. Berquist as well as many other scholars noted above. These scholars (and many more) will be addressed throughout what follows.

NON-BINARY HERMENEUTICS

In studying the term פִּלְגֶּשׁ/*pîlegeš* a new methodology has begun to take form. Incorporating the methodologies listed above, non-binary hermeneutics additionally addresses concepts from indigenous populations studies, migration and diaspora studies, and psychological research in identity formation and motivation.

Indigenous Studies

There is a strong representation in recent biblical scholarship in the areas of postcolonial theories, migration theories, and diaspora studies. Yet much of the HB, and of particular interest for this study, the DtrH concerns indigenous populations of the Southern Levant. In their work, *Indigenous People and Colonialism*, Colin Samson and Carlos Gigoux discuss contemporary scholarship on identity, land, and culture (among otherers) from a modern indigenous perspective. While the concepts and issues addressed in this book are undoubtedly postmodern dealing in post- and decolonial theories as they apply to indigenous populations under the modern concept of the nation-state, there are many ideas, theories, and concepts that can be applied to Ancient Near Eastern discussions of empire and colonized peoples.

Critiquing the Eurocentrism in their own field of sociology, Samson and Gigoux cite scholars of indigeneity and their transdisciplinary work in order to reorient the conversation to a global discussion removed from the umbrella of nationality often shrouding indigenous peoples.⁵³ In 1986 José Martínez Cobo offered a working definition for the term "indigenous." Samson and Gigoux summarize it thus:

The definition highlights indigenous peoples' (a) historical continuity, (b) longstanding connections to territories, (c) colonized conditions and (d) nondominant status in societies. It also highlights a subjective dimension by stressing (a) the intention of preserving indigenous ethnic identity, (b) self-determination and (c) self-identification.⁵⁴

Persian Period Yehud holds a rare position in that there are people in the land who claim to be indigenous while there is a migrant population (themselves victims of imperial forced migration) who also feel they have a right to the land. The question of indigeneity in the Southern Levant needed resolution.⁵⁵ Each group argued for their right to exist in the territory using several of the qualifiers listed in Cobo's definition. These arguments are couched throughout the PRDtrH.

In addition to defining indigeneity, Samson and Gigoux note the colonizing tactics of embedding patriarchy, social and psychological destabilization, and the eradication of indigenous culture through schooling.⁵⁶ Evidence will be laid out in chapter five concerning how each of these tactics is either described or made visible in the DtrH.

⁵³ Samson and Gigoux, *Indigenous Peoples and Colonialism*, x.

⁵⁴ Samson and Gigoux, *Indigenous Peoples and Colonialism*, 36.

⁵⁵ This is not the first time a group of women from within the DtrH has been thought to represent an indigenous population. According to Pekka M.A. Pitkänen, "The daughters of Zelophehad may actually represent one group of indigenous peoples that had been assimilated early and incorporated in the Israelite genealogies, as many of their names correspond with localities in Samaria (Josh. 17:3–4; cf. Num 36)," "Joshua," in *Fortress Commentary on the Bible: Two Volume Set*, Gale A. Yee, ed. (Minneapolis Minnesota: Fortress Press, 2016), Kindle Edition.

⁵⁶ Samson and Gigoux, *Indigenous Peoples and Colonialism*, 98-111.

Demonym and Dehumanic

A “demonym,” refers to a people group associated with a geographical location regardless of race, ethnicity, or nation of origin; it is a relatively new term.⁵⁷ It can be used broadly (Asian, Spanish), narrowly (Santa Fean, Bostonian), regionally (Appalachian, Central American), and it can describe a subset of people within a region (Melungeon, Chicano, Hapa). In most cases demonyms are formed with reference to a place, this is not always the case. In some instances, demonyms are self-identifiers such as Chicano,⁵⁸ while other demonym's etymological origins are dehumanic⁵⁹ (a term used to remove a person's humanity), such as Hapa⁶⁰ and Melungeon.⁶¹

In the 1960s and 70s, ‘Chicano/a’ was a self-identifier for a person in the Southwestern United States whose grandparents were Mexican; today it can be understood as cultural or ethnic with examples of the culture being appropriated in Japan.⁶² Hapa, stemming from the Japanese

⁵⁷ Terms used to describe a group of people from a specific location regardless of race, ethnicity, tribal, or national affiliation.

⁵⁸ Joan W. Moore and Harry Pachon, *Mexican Americans*, second ed., Ethnic Groups in American Life Series (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1976), 148-154.

⁵⁹ Derogatory nomenclature. Often an imperial tool used to dehumanize conquered and/or enslaved peoples, though not always. A key feature is that these terms do not have their origins in self-identity; rather, they are applied by an outsider. Dehumanics do more than dehumanize; they remove empathy from the relationship.

For complete working definition see glossary.

⁶⁰ Whether this term originated as derogatory and who is permitted to use the term is unclear and debated within the community. However, there is some record of it being applied and received with negative connotations. Johnson, Akemi. "Who Gets to be 'Hapa'?" *NPR*. August, 8, 2016. <https://www.npr.org/sections/codeswitch/2016/08/08/487821049/who-gets-to-be-hapa>

⁶¹ In this section a large number of dehumanics are listed. Use of these terms should be avoided. I have struggled during this writing process regarding whether or not I should use the dehumanics spelled out or redacted. Originally, I came to the conclusion that I would only use dehumanics describing an empowered group in their unredacted form. However, after many conversations with a number of scholars across multiple fields, I have been encouraged to leave all dehumanics referenced in this work unredacted.

⁶² Emily Rhyne, Walter Thompson-Hernández and Alexandra Eaton "Inside Japan's Chicano Subculture," *New York Times: Culture*, <https://www.nytimes.com/video/style/100000005806771/japan-chicano->

word for half, originally meaning half Asian or Pacific Islander and particularly in reference to the Pacific geographical location, now it can refer to anyone who traces any part of their heritage to Asian or the Pacific Islands.⁶³ Melungeon, once a dehumanic specific to certain peoples of the Appalachian region of the United States, was adopted and adapted by the people into a nomenclature of self-pride.

As a parallel to Pilagshean (on several levels) and as it is a lesser known group, I will take a moment to explain and describe the Melungeons and highlight the parallels. The term is thought to be from the French *mélange* (mixed), tracing their origins to 1567, with external witnesses of the people possibly existing as early as 1654.⁶⁴ Despite a long history in the region, the term was not used as a self-identifier until the 1960s, when it was rarely used, and only in the last decade of the twentieth-century did it garner traction as the demonym⁶⁵ of a "proud people," thanks in part to the Kennedy's book. Early DNA testing of cherry picked participants revealed a possible "triracial" background of Mediterranean, African, and Native American; however, many self-identified Melungeon have volunteered for DNA tests since then that have come back with varying results.⁶⁶ Regardless of DNA evidence, the number of self-identifying Melungeons was on the rise in the early twentieth century, as Schrift points out, "becoming Melungeon is a

[culture.html?smid=fb-share&fbclid=IwAR3yyF-Mk0OjRq1Q-IXhDaLmBmlJ74QrA95bEbAzdfVcCeHcwGyEd3REIW0](https://www.facebook.com/culture.html?smid=fb-share&fbclid=IwAR3yyF-Mk0OjRq1Q-IXhDaLmBmlJ74QrA95bEbAzdfVcCeHcwGyEd3REIW0).

⁶³ Kip Fulbeck, Sean Lennon, and Paul Spickard, *Part Asian: 100% Hapa* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 2006), front matter.

⁶⁴ N. Brent Kennedy and Robyn Vaughan Kennedy, *The Melungeons: The Resurrection of a Proud People: An Untold Story of Ethnic Cleansing in America*. Second, rev., and corr. ed. (Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1997), xiii & 10. Both Melungeon and Pilagshean are partitive dehumanics.

⁶⁵ Melissa Schrift, *Becoming Melungeon: Making an Ethnic Identity in the Appalachian South* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013), 3. Similarly the Pilagsheans attempted to trace their heritage – most specifically with Abimelech and Rizpah.

⁶⁶ Schrift, *Becoming Melungeon*, 108-109.

journey with significant personal rewards for most individuals today ... Melungeon descendants gain a strong sense of community, heritage, and meaning through the process."⁶⁷ A demonym can have its foundation in a dehumanic, in many cases being shunned for a time and then taken on with pride by the peoples originally dehumanized by the term. Similarly, פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* was a dehumanic that eventually became an epithet claimed by the people.

Dehumanics are derogatory nomenclature. They are often an imperial tool used to dehumanize conquered and/or enslaved peoples, though not always. A key feature is that these terms do not have their origins in self-identity; rather, they are applied by an outsider as a way to delegitimize or dehumanize. Dehumanics do more than dehumanize; they remove empathy from the relationship.⁶⁸ These terms are formed with reference to location (Gypsy, Chink, Oriental, Bohemian, Indian), as descriptive (retard, Nigger, tranny, illegal, slut, incorrect pronouns), as animalistic (Mulatto, pig, coyote, yellowbelly), concerning action (whore, Spic, Wetback, Guido, cracker), through objectification (Eskimo, pussy, faggot), via class (peasant, slave/servant, untouchable, concubine, second wife), barbarizing (hill people, heathen), and as partitives (Hapa, Melungeon, woman).⁶⁹ These terms are at their foundation intended to deal in, describe, create, and enforce power relationships.

⁶⁷ Schrift, *Becoming Melungeon*, 110. Cf. Kennedy and Kennedy, *Melungeons*, 143-145. Displaying the need and actions taken to create entitivity (defined below and in the glossary). Much like the Pilagsheans noting their desirability as partners for royalty.

⁶⁸ Erich Wise, an artist whose practice includes studies in semiotics and sociology, suggested this as a key element of the definition of dehumanics in private conversation. This contribution, in hindsight seems obvious, but was a key component that I missed. While citation of peer-reviewed sources is integral in scholarship, when developing a new term and its definition (especially in light of my practice of reaching outside of traditional Biblical Scholarship), it is important to recognize the communality of this endeavor and the contributions of those who helped in the development of the definition.

⁶⁹ This list is by no means exhaustive.

The etymology of these words is often slippery and elusive, with multiple explanations offered for each term in many cases. Some people will argue that the terms were not all intended to be dehumanizing or are not dehumanizing at all. However, I cannot underscore this enough: when people who possess the ability to self-identify are named or described in any other way than how they identify it is at the very least offensive and in every way dehumanizing. The above list encompasses dehumanics from the Contemporary Era (CE). It is extensive enough to show the breadth of application, though it is in no way exhaustive. Below are specific examples from above that are in some way paralleled to this study or are directly related to it. For the purpose of brevity, not all terms listed above will be addressed below.

Each type of dehumanic encourages a lack of empathy in a specific way. Locative/geographic dehumanics appear descriptive, similar to gentilics or demonyms;⁷⁰ however, these terms are often incorrect, over generalized, inaccurate, or imply “uncivilized” due to the nature of land occupied and lack of governmental oversight possible. Some dehumanics are incorrect demonyms such as referring to Romani as Gypsies (short for Egyptian) or First Nations Peoples of the Americas as Indians. There are also inaccurate or over general dehumanics such as Bohemian (no longer a country or region) or Oriental. Barbarizing dehumanics like “hill people” and heathen, suggest a ruralness that is difficult to govern (i.e. regulate and tax).⁷¹ While several of the dehumanics listed above are found in the biblical text, for brevity’s sake I will only go

⁷⁰ Gentilic: adj. “of or relating to a noun or adjective that denotes ethnic or national affiliation;” alternately n. “a name with gentilic value,” <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/gentilic>

Demonym: n. a term used to describe a group of people from a specific location regardless of race, ethnicity, tribal, or national affiliation.

The first written example of demonym is from the mid-nineteenth-century CE originally meaning pen name; its current meaning came about in the 1990s, *English Oxford Living Dictionary*. <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/demonym>

⁷¹ Cf. James C. Scott, *Against the Grain: A Deep History of the Earliest States*, Yale Agrarian Studies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), 13-14.

over a few dehumanics here that are significant to this study, namely partitive and barbarizing dehumanics.

פילגש/*Pilegeš* is a partitive dehumanic. Partitive dehumanics suggest that people from the group are not fully human. Words like Hapa and Melungeon stem from partitive words. These dehumanics imply there is a wholeness or purity of which these people do not belong. Whereas the word “woman,” perhaps not immediately understood as partitive, finds its origins in not being entirely human or at least not the default of human. The Old English of adult human female was *wif* and its counterpart was *wer*. At the time *man*, of Northern-European origin, meant “humankind,” as is still one of its definitions.⁷² However, *wer* fell out of use with the preference for *man*. The appropriated gender-neutral word had a new meaning: “adult human male.” In the eighth-century CE *wif-man* was introduced (lit: adult female servant). Over the next few centuries it became woman in Middle English specifically. By taking on the gender-neutral word *man* as primarily meaning male, the adult human male had officially become the *default* human in the English-speaking world.⁷³

In the creation of the term *woman*, the inference was made: the female of the species is never the default and only exists as part of or as a product of the male of the species; a

⁷² In German *Mann* means “man,” *man* means “one” (neutered), and *mensch* means “human.” I note this, as English retains a considerable amount of German. *Mensch* is even used by contemporary English speakers to mean “a man with a heart” (gender specific). This came from the German through Yiddish into English. However, wherein German *mensch* still means “human” (and therefore includes women), the English understanding is masculine only. Peter H. Dreyer, “Who Put the 'Man' in 'Mensch'?” *The Christian Science Monitor*, 1997. <https://www.csmonitor.com/1997/1110/111097.home.home.3.html>

The German *Mann* and *man* might have been conflated in Middle English leading to this new use of man. This is speculation, as I have not gone into the etymology of the German terms.

⁷³ For full etymological discussions of on these words see word entries in the online dictionaries *Lexico*, powered by Oxford and *Online Etymology Dictionary* compiled and produced by Douglas Harper, <https://www.etymonline.com>. *Online Etymology Dictionary*, though not a traditional source, is recommended by the University of Oxford Arts and Humanities Community as, “an excellent tool for those seeking the origins of words, the usage of words and their contexts.”

subservient position at most. The implications of this linguistic change were felt broadly in the English speaking and reading world as the Bible was translated into English and circulated. With the Hebrew terms אָדָם/’*ādām* and אִישׁ/’*īš* (both translated “man” meaning “human” and adult male human)⁷⁴ translated without distinction either from each other as separate Hebrew terms or with reference to the non-gendered implication of אָדָם/’*ādām*, compacted with the difficulties of the inaccurate etymology of אִישׁ/’*īš* and אִשָּׁה/’*īššā* presented in Genesis 2:23⁷⁵ may be understood to have contributed to the dehumanization of adult females in the English speaking world. Combined with the problematic translations of Gen 2:18⁷⁶ and Gen 3:16⁷⁷ into English, and the dehumanizing force of *woman* is fully felt. A woman is not thought of as the default for man.⁷⁸

To understand the English term “woman” as a dehumanic becomes poignant in this study in so much as פִּלְגֶשׁ/’*pīlegeš* was distanced from its origin as a dehumanic for Egyptian men (fully explored below) and presumed to refer to women only. Full humanity removed, the term was ignored and therefore denied full exegetical attention in the English-speaking world until the latter portion of the twenty-first century. And while one may argue that English is merely one

⁷⁴ “Human” codified until the fifteen-century CE, well after the first English translations of the Bible appeared.

⁷⁵ Shockingly, this Midrashic explanation has continued to be presented as linguistic fact despite the utter ridiculousness of the statement from a linguistic perspective. It is so little questioned that אִשָּׁה/’*īššā* was not a separate entry from אִישׁ/’*īš* in the original publication *TDOT*; nor was a separate entry made in the most recent edition of this reputable dictionary.

⁷⁶ A well-documented translation issue. See Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*. Overtures to Biblical Theology 2 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), 90; Berquist, Jon L., *Reclaiming Her Story: The Witness of Women in the Old Testament* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 1992), 35.

⁷⁷ Jerome’s *Vulgate* translation of Genesis 3:16 from the Hebrew, rather than the Greek reads: “He also said to the woman, “I will multiply your toil and your childbearing. In grief you will bring forth sons; and you will be under the power of the man, and he himself⁷⁷ will have rule of you.” (*au. trans.*); cf. Berquist, *Reclaiming Her Story*, 35.

⁷⁸ As Wilda Gafney notes there is a mis-assumption concerning the gendering in translation of Hebrew masculine plural as being only masculine as opposed to assumed male and female. Her work specifically deals with prophets, but this can be applied to other nouns as well. Wilda C. M. Gafney, *Daughters of Miriam: Women Prophets in Ancient Israel* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008), 160.

language into which the Hebrew text was translated, there is no denying the power of the colonizing force of Britain and the religious evangelizing of the British empire.

The dehumanics listed above and the specifically cited examples, being modern and perhaps considered anachronistic to the text under examination, have fore-parents in ancient practices. One recognizable dehumanic still in use today, “barbarian,” is its own classification of dehumanic. Empires in the HB used barbarizing dehumanics regularly. Barbarian was the term used by the Greeks to mock the speech patterns of any non-Greek (and therefore uncivilized). As James C. Scott notes, "a great many, apparently ethnic names turn out to be, when translated literally a description of people's geography applied to them by state discourse: 'hill people,' 'swamp dwellers,' 'forest people,' 'people of the steppes.'"⁷⁹ Scott goes on to note that the geography was directly associated with the nature of the peoples as civilized or savage, those outside of the walls and independent from the state were barbarians.⁸⁰ It is significant to underscore, the very terms barbarian and savage are dehumanic and to this day illicit a sense of violence or lack of control. Lastly, for the sake of this subject, he notes that despite the use of homogenizing dehumanics the states used to reference these *uncivilized* people, they were rarely a cohesive group with a distinct cultural identity, rather they were loosely confederated tribes gathering only briefly for military purposes.⁸¹ Amorite, Canaanite, and Ephramite are a few such dehumanics found in the biblical text, though it is likely that there are many more.

⁷⁹ *Against the Grain*, 228.

⁸⁰ Scott, *Against the Grain*, 229.

⁸¹ Scott, *Against the Grain*, 235. Point of interest, though the terms barbarian and savage, today, connote violence or cruelty. Scott notes that during the time that the Amorites had control of the of Ur III they "abolished most taxes and forced labor ... and encouraged a society of large farmers, merchants, and free subjects," 215.

Lastly, a particularly significant part of dehumanics is the literal undermining of the people as human. Referring to them by descriptors or in ways they would not identify themselves (intentionally or not) places them in the category of *homo sacer*; Dunbar-Ortiz notes, “anyone may kill a *homo sacer* without it being considered murder.”⁸² Dehumanics remove human empathy from the inter-personal equation. It is the darkest form of in-group/out-group behavior as it removes the dehumanized people in part or entirely from the human species, allowing the people in power to act with impunity.

Psychology

Throughout the HB dehumanics, demonyms, and gentilics are used regularly and without distinction. It is clear that the writers and redactors of these ancient texts felt a need to make distinctions between peoples with the use of labels. Late twentieth-century and early twenty-first-century social psychologists offer theories of identity to explain the motivations of dehumanization and in- and out-grouping. Notably these theories focus on group relations, uncertainty resolution, and fear of death.

Michael A. Hogg, Dominic Abrams, et al. have been at the forefront on social identifications, and inclusion and exclusion with the books, *Social Identifications: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes* and *Social Psychology of Inclusion and Exclusion*, as well as numerous journal articles on the subject.⁸³ Hogg’s Self-Uncertainty

⁸² The term is defined as “a person banned from society, excluded from its legal protections but still subject to the sovereign’s power,” *Indigenous Peoples’ History*, 218.

⁸³ Michael A. Hogg, and Dominic Abrams, *Social Identifications: A Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations and Group Processes* (London: Routledge, 1988); and Michael A. Hogg, Dominic Abrams, and José M. Marques, *Social Psychology of Inclusion and Exclusion* (New York: Psychology Press, 2005).

Identity theory addresses people's motivation for joining a group. He hypothesized, and research supports, that people do not like feeling uncertain. In order to alleviate this discomfort a person will seek a group with which *Ze/they*⁸⁴ can identify. A group's identity can be defined by how much the members have in common, or entitativity.⁸⁵ The more members have in common the less uncertain a person feels when *ze/they* too has those things in common. People will even change things about themselves to fit within the parameters of a group's identity.⁸⁶

The concept of Terror Management Theory (TMT), introduced by anthropologist Ernest Becker in 1973, was codified by Sheldon Solomon, Jeff Greenberg, and Thomas A. Pyszczynski as a psychological theory in 2015.⁸⁷ In this work, the authors describe the human need to conquer death fear, which includes the development of social groups as a way to have a societal impact even after death,⁸⁸ they note, "Reminders of death don't just provoke more negative reactions to those who fail to live up to our values. They also spawn more positive responses to people who uphold them."⁸⁹

While the tactic of dehumanization has long been observed, recent scholarship has begun to delve into the motivations behind the dehumanization of "others" including its use in

⁸⁴ Third person, neutered, singular personal pronoun.

⁸⁵ "Entitativity: *n.* the extent to which a group or collective is considered by others to be a real entity having unity, coherence, and internal organization rather than a set of independent individuals...[first described by Donald Campbell]," *APA Dictionary of Psychology*, <https://dictionary.apa.org/entitativity>.

⁸⁶ Michael A. Hogg and Kipling D. Williams, "From *I* to *We*: Social Identity and the Collective Self." *Group Dynamics: Theory, Research, and Practice*, One Hundred Years of Groups Research 4, no. 1 (2000): 81–97. doi:10.1037/1089-2699.4.1.81, 91-92.

⁸⁷ Sheldon Solomon, Jeff Greenberg, and Thomas A. Pyszczynski. *The Worm at the Core: On the Role of Death in Life*, Penguin Psychology (London: Penguin Books, 2016).

⁸⁸ Solomon, Greenberg, Pyszczynski, *The Worm*, 12.

⁸⁹ Solomon, Greenberg, Pyszczynski, *The Worm*, 17.

warfare,⁹⁰ and conversations around immigration.⁹¹ The theories, research, and writing done by the social psychologists noted here directly influence the readings of the Hebrew text that follow. Recognizing the need to belong and feel safe as profound psychological motivations that have led to discrimination (from segregation to genocide) is important in the discussion of פִּלְגֶשׁ/pîlegeš as well as other Hebrew terms used to classify peoples (whether they are gentiles, demonyms, societal positions, or professions). With each nomenclature given to a people group in the HB, it is imperative to not simply accept that the name is tribal, national, or self-imposed. Rather, using the contemporary theories of identity and inclusion and exclusion a careful reader may be able to unmask hidden agendas of an oppressor or a resistance fighter, further decolonizing the reading of the text.

CONCLUSION

Scholarship does not exist in a vacuum. It is by its very nature a long, deliberate, and at times tedious process. The work that follows owes everything to the work noted in the previous two chapters. The work reviewed for this endeavor was addressed in categories: “The History of Biblical Scholarship,” “Marriage Institutions and Laws and Inheritance in the Hebrew Bible,” and “Methodology.” The former

The History of Scholarship was included in Chapter 1. This chapter opened with a discussion of inheritance. As inheritance in the HB was determined by procreation practices and

⁹⁰ Emile Bruneau, "The enemy as animal: Symmetric dehumanization during asymmetric warfare," PLoS One 12, no. 7 (2017): doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0181422.

⁹¹ Kimberly Costello and Gordon Hodson. “Exploring the Roots of Dehumanization: The Role of Animal—Human Similarity in Promoting Immigrant Humanization,” *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 13, no. 1 (2010): 3–22. doi:10.1177/1368430209347725.

the resulting offspring this section was dedicated to the scholarship around Hebrew terms often presumed to be referring to women as sexual partners, laws governing sexuality, and the rights of the children to inherit. Hebrew terms discussed include: אִשָּׁה /'iššâ, בַּעֲלָה / *ba'ālâ*, אִמָּה /'āmâ, שִׁפְחָה /šiphâ, פִּילֶגֶשׁ /*pîlegeš*, and זֹנָה /*zōnâ*. The women under discussion are almost exclusively regarded in light of their value to the family and relationship to men. The nuances of these terms, their translation, and the impact on the offspring was discussed in some detail.

Under methodology I have listed all the exegetical methods, traditional and new, along with the scholars consulted. While acknowledging my foundations in these hermeneutics, I introduce non-binary hermeneutics as the approach taken for this endeavor. An interdisciplinary hermeneutic developed to use on any media. Non-binary hermeneutics is still being defined. The key feature is a strict reading/viewing infused with the application of theories from multiple disciplines as natural for exegesis (regardless of topic). Following the lead of Schneider in close readings (including word counting and grammatical analysis), I include etymological studies of ancient and contemporary words and the repercussions of assumptions around gender, class, and historical accuracy. Walking in the footsteps of Berquist's incorporation of several social scientific methodologies and constant desire to read the text through innovative approaches, I looked to scientific studies from psychology, geology, economics, and social sciences generally to better understand the text and its context from a larger scope than biblical studies alone can offer. Additionally, a great debt is owed to work in narratology, semiotics, meaning making, and folklore done across a variety of fields from biblical studies, to fine arts, and psychoanalysis. What follows could not possibly exist without the work discussed above; and the above discussion, does not do justice to the work of my predecessors.

CHAPTER 3

THE LEXEME: פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*PĪLEGEŠ*

INTRODUCTION

There have been innumerable attempts to define פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*. Presumed to not have Semitic origins, some suggest that it is a late addition to the text, possibly finding its inception in the Greek, *παλλακη/pallakē or παλλακης/pallakēs*, meaning “maiden” or “concubine.”¹ Alternately, perhaps from the Latin of *paelex*, which was conflated with (and later abandoned for primary usage of) *concubina*, “one who lives in concubinage,” which means “the union of an unmarried man with an unmarried woman.”² In this vein, Schneider explains that it is problematic to simply translate פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* as “concubine” and uses the transliteration of the word instead.³ The translation options for this word and the way in which those the moniker is applied and described betrays several assumptions brought to the text.

In order to fully explore the term and its use in the HB, many assumptions must be abandoned. Some assumptions such as the part of speech and gender of the word come from

¹ Definition from John Pickering, *A Comprehensive Lexicon of the Greek Language, Adapted to the Use of Colleges and Schools in the United States* (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott & Co, 1873), 990. Cf. A. Graeme Auld, *I & II Samuel: A Commentary* (Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 400. This connection is offered showing varying degrees of absoluteness in *HALOT*, *BDB*, *Gesenius*, and *TDOT*. Rabin notes the earliest use of the Greek *παλλακη/pallakē* solely meant “young maiden,” the meaning of which adapted over time to include “concubine.” This adaptation likely happened after the translation of the Hebrew into Greek and Latin. He suggests that the change was influenced by the introduction of פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* through the LXX and its translation into Latin as *concubina* in the Vulgate, “*Pīlegeš*,” 355.

² Concubinage has a very specific definition in Latin that is “the union of an unmarried man with an unmarried woman” or “adulterous intercourse.” Surprisingly this is less offensive in Latin to *paelax*, which is “a kept mistress,” or “concubine of a married man.” E. A. Andrews, William Freund, Charlton Thomas Lewis, and Charles Short. *A Latin Dictionary Founded on Andrews' Edition of Freund's Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), *Paelax* is not used to translate פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* within the Vulgate version of the HB; rather, the preferred term is *concubin-*.

³ Schneider, *Judges*, 128. See full explanation in History of Scholarship above.

contextual clues. When dealing directly with a specific text, tradition often dictates the translation (particularly when a full treatment of the term may be out of the purview of the present focus). For example, perpetuating the assumption that פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* is a feminine noun, is understandable as in every case but one the term is used with and surrounding women.

Another assumption, though not made in the case of many words, is that the term is used exactly the same in every instance despite its use in multiple books written centuries apart. As this is not an assumption commonly made with Hebrew terms, it is interesting to suppose the reason פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* is not treated in the same manner as other rare Hebrew terms is due to the subject matter as notably insignificant (though one could argue that 35 occurrences is hardly *rare*), which draws the full circle to the assumption that this term is used of women with no agency.⁴ As will be detailed below, breaking down assumptions around פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* concerning its part of speech, gender, universal meaning, and diachronic usage open the door to alternative meanings.

Two potential biases that impact the translation of פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* are "availability cascade" and "anchoring bias."⁵ In the case of פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš*, the "availability cascade" might stem from

⁴ Interestingly, the very fact that this word is presumed to refer to women without agency ends up being precisely the thing that has brought it to the forefront of research in the last three to four decades. It is also important to note that assumptions are a valuable part of the human existence. Assumptions allow us to go about our daily lives without becoming bogged down in details that may distract from a point under study. To recognize assumptions is not to suggest that anyone is lazy or has not addressed a subject from a critical perspective. As Brett Sherman and Gilbert Harman conclude, "knowledge often rests on assumptions that you are justified in making even though you do not know those assumptions to be true," "Knowledge and Assumptions," *Philosophical Studies: An International Journal for Philosophy in the Analytic Tradition* 156, no. 1 (2011): 140. <http://www.jstor.org/fuller.idm.oclc.org/stable/41487725>.

⁵ "Availability cascades are seen as an outcome of the need to reduce cognitive effort and act in ways that are consistent with the majority's behavior," Timothy G. Pollock, Violina P. Rindova, and Patrick G. Maggitti. "Market Watch: Information and Availability Cascades among the Media and Investors in the US IPO Market," *Academy of Management Journal* 51, no. 2 (2008): 335–58. doi:10.5465/AMJ.2008.31767275, 336. Anchoring bias or effect is what occurs when someone is given an information starting point, which influences all estimates thereafter. As Amos Tversky and Daniel Kahneman. note, "different starting points yield different

the Chronicler's use of the term, which undoubtedly should be translated as "concubine" due to the circular development of the Greek term *παλλακης/pallakēs*, as discussed by Rabin and noted above, and the exoticizing work of Greek historians, such as Herodotus, described below. The second bias, "anchoring bias," influences contemporary readers who tend to read the HB synchronically wherein the translation of *פִּילְגֶשׁ/pīlegeš* in Genesis (which was impacted by the LXX's use of *παλλακης/pallakēs*) persuades the reading and understanding of the term in the DtrH. These biases will be broken down through a diachronic exploration of the term's use outside of the DtrH.

PART OF SPEECH

The assumption that *פִּילְגֶשׁ/pīlegeš* is a noun is so pervasive that it is not questioned. As noted above, in attempts to define the term scholars compare it to what is presumed are similar nouns such as *אִמָּה/’āmā*, *שִׁפְחָה/šiphā*, and even *אִשָּׁה/’iššā*; nouns often also used of the people labeled *פִּילְגֶשׁ/pīlegeš*. Yet there has been no comparison to gentilics, which are also commonly used in conjunction with these terms.⁶ In comparing *פִּילְגֶשׁ/pīlegeš* to other biblical gentilics it becomes clear that it is not a gentilic, but this does not exclude it from consideration as an adjective. Ezekiel's use of the term was entirely with the intention of dehumanizing the people he referenced (in practice he created a dehumanic), *פִּילְגֶשׁ/pīlegeš* was then used as a dehumanic by the redactors of Gen.⁷ In the DtrH the term was again adapted and used as a demonym, though

estimates, which are biased towards the initial values,” “Judgment Under Uncertainty: Heuristics and Biases.” *ORI Research Bulletin* 13, no. 1 (1973): 1-33. doi:10.1037/e301492005-001, 20.

⁶ Ruth a Moabite *אִשָּׁה/’iššā*, Hagar the Egyptian *אִמָּה/’āmā*, *אִשָּׁה/’iššā* (in Gen), and *פִּילְגֶשׁ/pīlegeš* (in Chronicles, which will be addressed later), daughters of Canaan(ite) as *אִשָּׁה/’iššā*

⁷ Dehumanic is an adjectival gerund of dehumanize. See full definition in the methodology section of chapter 2. The dehumanic use of *פִּילְגֶשׁ/pīlegeš* will be expanded on below.

similar to a gentile, is unique. Truly, there are several terms in the HB that are treated as gentiles (despite not qualifying as such).⁸ Linguistic parallels to compare פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* to are found in the words transliterated as Amorite, Canaanite, and sometimes Hittite.⁹ These terms, though treated at times as gentiles, are dehumanics and demonyms.¹⁰

פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* is a term that first appeared in written form in the exilic period, used semi-regularly and fairly consistently in the early to mid-Persian Period, and adapted (even simplified) in the latter part of the Persian Period. It was used for a fairly short period of time and though

⁸ Demonyms like Amorite, Canaanite, Abiezrite, and Hittite are recognized as having other meanings. Though there are more examples of this in the HB, identified through a close reading of a Hebrew lexicon, I have chosen to use these as examples due to their specific uses in the texts and periods pertinent to this study. Amorite, Canaanite, and Hittite are terms that were used by Ezra and Nehemiah (among others) in naming those who the people should not marry. However, Amorite and Hittite no longer described living people groups by the Persian period and were simply used by biblical authors to other the people living in the Yehud. Amorite gave way to Aramean and was out of use by c. 600 BCE. While Hittite was an ancient gentile, by the Persian period there was no one who referred to themselves in this manner (this people gone by the first millennium BCE). Canaanite was still in use during the postexilic period and acted as it had before as a term for othering.

HALOT specifically notes of Amorite, “only a geographic and political term, not ethnic,” the Akkadian cognate meaning “west, land in the west,” “אֲמֹרִי.” “To the Mesopotamians, the ‘Barbarian’ Amorites were beyond pale because they purportedly ‘know not grain ... eat uncooked meat and do not bury their dead,’” according to Scott, *Against the Grain*, 136-137.

Canaanite is a gentile (better understood as a demonym) meaning people from Canaan or tradesman, cf. HALOT, “כְּנַעֲנִי.” To say from Canaan is deceiving as the term while used often to refer to Phoenicia, Syria, and generally the land west of the Jordan. I propose that the biblical use of Canaanite is similar to the Mesopotamian use of Amorite described in the following footnote.

Meanwhile a Hebrew term like אֲבִיעֶזְרִי/*’abī’zrī*, which never actually occurs in the HB, is translated as Abiezrite rather than how it actually appears in the Masoretic Text, “my father is the helper” אֲבִי הָעֶזֶר/*’abī hā’ezer* (Judg 6:11, 24 and 8:12). This word will be dealt with and parsed out in more detail in the section below on Abimelech.

⁹ The terms Amorite and Canaanite are used to describe people from a general geographic area. Amorites from the north Eastern Mediterranean Seaboard and Canaanites from the south Eastern Mediterranean Seaboard. Scott writes of the “barbarians” such as Amorite, “[t]hese groups were all loose confederacies of disparate peoples brought together briefly for military purposes and then characterized by the threatened state as a ‘people,’” Scott, *Against the Grain*, 235.

¹⁰ While the use of the adjectival sufformative (this is not particular to gentiles) is often used for gentiles (§ 88Mg, Joun and Mouroaka, *Hebrew Grammar*) as is the case in Amorite and Canaanite, not all gentiles are formed in this manner. Chaldeans comes from the Hebrew כַּשְׁדִּים/*Kašdīm*, the Hebrew for Aramean is אֲרָם/*’Arām*, and both אֲדוֹם/*’Edôm* and אֲדוֹמִי/*’Edômī* can be translated as Edomite. The LXX offers potential evidence to support an ancient understanding of פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* as a gentile/demonym in Ezekiel 23:20 where it changes פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* to Χαλδαιους, “Chaldeans.” This would have been a *correction* made by the LXX translators, who by the time of the translating of Ezekiel into Greek, would not have recognized פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* as referring to Egyptian men.

consistent within smaller canons (such as the Pentateuch, DtrH, or Chronicles), its simplification and falling out of use by the early fourth-century BCE explains why it is so difficult to find the root, or a cognate for it. Created by someone on the "inside," it is an adjective used to other and demean those to whom it was applied,¹¹ eventual being adopted by said people.¹² As it was used for a limited time, appropriated, adapted, and simplified; it came to mean something altogether different from its impetus by the time the canon was closed. The Pilagshean PRDtrH, with its individual threads include complementary traditions (including adapted pre-exilic traditions) strategically placed in the developing history of Yehud. The people referred to as פִּילָגְשִׁים/*pīlagšīm* were the people who remained in the land during the exile. The ribbon of text does not only tell of their existence, but highlights the religious, political, and cultural arguments that took place in Yehud during the Persian Period.¹³

Possible Literal Translations and Etymology

There are a few defensible possibilities for the origination and literal definition of פִּילָגְשִׁים/*pīlegeš*. It may be a pidgin term: an amalgam of the Greek παλλακήν/*pallakēn*, and the Hebrew/Semitic פֶּלֶג/*peleg*,¹⁴ having a rough translation of half or separated-maiden. The term

¹¹ This happens throughout history. “‘Barbarian’ and its many cousins — ‘savage,’ ‘wild,’ ‘raw,’ ‘forest people,’ ‘hill people’ — are terms invented in state centers to describe and stigmatize those who had not yet become state subjects,” writes Scott, *Against the Grain*, 221

¹² Similar to the creation and adoption of the titles Methodist, Baptist, Melungeon, and Hapa in the Common Era. In this case and throughout, I recognize that a social anthropological comparison does not prove that such a thing happened in the time and place under discussion. However, the fact that it has happened independently in multiple places throughout history may display a psychological propensity for an othered group to appropriate a derogatory term in order to remove the stigma and create their own ingroup.

¹³ This will be expanded in the layered reading of the פִּילָגְשִׁים/*pīlegeš* ribbon in chapter 4.

¹⁴ Is this a TDOT concept or am I assuming someone else came up with it because I always assume my ideas always come from elsewhere.

παλλακη/*pallakē*, from παλλακις/*pallakis* can mean “maiden,” but also carries the connotation of one who is sexually active.¹⁵ Combine it with the Semitic word פֶּלֶג/*peleg*, “part,” half,” “division” and one has a good understanding regarding the ambiguous and unprotected role of the people who would have been known by this moniker. The philology of the pidgin meaning, and formation of the word is based on lingual inter-changeability and transliteration practices between Greek and Hebrew. Despite both Greek and Hebrew having "g" equivalents, "g" and "k" are lingually interchangeable,¹⁶ and the use of σ in place of ψ is also expected when moving from Hebrew to Greek.¹⁷ Though ψ may be transliterated as σ in the Hebrew to Greek crossover, the reverse is not true and a σ would simply be transliterated as the Hebrew ס. Though not out of the realm of possibilities, there is no reason to believe that any people group in Persian Period Yehud would have been referred to by a Greek pidgin moniker. It might, therefore, be concluded that the LXX "translation" of פֶּלֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* to παλλακις/*pallakis* was homonymistic.¹⁸ A mistake that led to the morphing of the Greek παλλακις/*pallakis* from young maiden to concubine over the next few centuries as documented by Rabin.¹⁹

Semantics

Assuming פֶּלֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* is a loan word, of which no clear origin can be determined, it is

¹⁵ As seen by its association with παλλακη/*pallakē*, which means “concubine” or “mistress,” but distinguished from “lawful wife.” Rabin points out that παλλακις/*pallakis* only occurs once in the LXX (Job19:17), which has nothing to do with פֶּלֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*, "*Pilegesh*," 354.

¹⁶ An example of such is found in the Greek transliteration of καμηλος/*kamēlos* for the Hebrew/Semitic גָּמַל/*gāmāl*, "camel."

¹⁷ As seen in the name Joshua, יְהוֹשֻׁעַ/*Yešū‘a* becomes Ιησους/*Isous*.

¹⁸ This would include the assumption that later Greek scribes corrected the transliteration παλλακις/*pallakis* to the known word παλλακη/*pallakē*.

¹⁹ Rabin, "*Pilegesh*," 355.

in every dictionary and discussion treated as a feminine noun. As its foreign origins cannot be definitively uncovered that presumption will be dismissed and an alternative explanation offered. One must also reconsider the assumption that this term is necessarily feminine. Though it is used in apposition to females, it is also used substantively for males. Note also that the term never appears in a feminine form. Finally, the presumption that this term is a noun has gone unquestioned. The latter two items (gender and part of speech) will be discussed simultaneously, as discussion of the one informs the other.

פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* is not a loan word, it is a compound word. Compound terms are not common in Hebrew and "are frequently used as proper nouns, e.g. גַּבְרִיאֵל [*gabrī'ēl*] 'man of God;' on very rare occasions they used as common nouns, e.g. בְּלִיעַל [*bēlīya 'al*] 'good-for-nothing'"²⁰ or "worthless." As is the case with בְּלִיעַל/*bēlīya 'al*, the proper versus common nature of the noun is not made clear through its origins or use and determining this maybe more a preference of the translator than based on any linguistic semantics.

There are not many options:

- זֵשׁ/אִישׁ + פֶּלֶג/*peleg* - literally meaning "divided/part/half person."²¹ The meaning is multivalent conveying the idea of "half human" while at the same time recognizing the origin of the people described as the those separated or divided out during the exile (those who were left behind) "division of the people." The glaring problem with this is the acquiescence of both ז and י. I can find no examples of the loss of two radicals in the creation of a compound word outside of theophoric names. This may set precedent for

²⁰ Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, Subsidia Biblica, 27. (Roma: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2006), §87c. As a point of interest, the indeclinability of בְּלִיעַל/*bēlīya 'al* is noted in this sub-section of the grammar.

²¹ Was this in someone else's book? Did I come up with this and presume that I am plagiarizing?

שׁ/š as an abbreviation of אֵשׁ/’š in the same way יָ/ȳā is a shortened form of יְהוָה/YHWH in theophoric names.²²

- שׁ/š + פָּלָה/gālā - literally meaning "set apart/aside *for/to* grope/touch". As is the case with "half/divided human," this definition is multivalent. It can refer to the blind groping of non-YHWHists, as שׁ/š/*gāšāš appears only once in the HB in reference to blind groping (Isa 59:10).²³ However, it has the pun-ability of meaning one set aside to touch.²⁴ This compound is of two verbs, becoming a gerundive. Acting as a modifying adjective in some instances and a substantive in others.²⁵

The definitions offered here support the assertion that פִּילְגֵשׁ/pīlegeš is as an adjective.²⁶

Gentilics

Loosely, a gentilic in ancient Hebrew is an adjective that denotes a people group.²⁷ In the HB substantive adjectives used as gentilics are proper nouns. These *nomina gentilicia* tend to use

²² After doing a full survey of every term that ends in שׁ I have found no other examples of this in the HB.

²³ This is appropriate in the context of a religious discussion in which an accusation is made that the people who were divided out and left behind are religiously blind.

²⁴ The Arm. Eth. and Tigr cognates have the meaning of the Hebrew related term נָגַשׁ/גָּשׁ (Isa 65:5 and Job 41:9) "to feel, touch" HALOT, 206.

²⁵ This translation/understanding of the term could have led to the acceptance of "concubine" as the translation, as in many cultures, concubines are special/set aside. Neither of these terms are used heavily in the MT. פָּלָה appears four times, thrice in Exodus once in Psalms and in each case the action being described is a setting aside of something.

²⁶ Bruce K. Waltke and Michael Patrick O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1990), §5.7c, p. 93; cf. Joüon and Muraoka. *A Grammar*, § 88Mg.

²⁷ For the purpose of brevity, I will not attempt to analyze every gentilic in the HB. I will on the other hand offer examples from the list of peoples to be conquered (which eventually became the list of forbidden peoples) כְּנַעֲנִי/cānā’ānī, חִתִּי/hittī, אֲמֹרִי/emōrī from several books in the HB. These people groups are listed in seventeen verses in seven books of the HB (Exod, Nu, Deut, Josh, Judg, Ezra, and Neh). Additional peoples included inconsistently in these seventeen lists are: פְּרִזִּי/pērizzī (15/17x), חִי/hīvī (14/17x), גִּרְגָּשִׁי/girgāšī (4/17x), and אֲמֹנִי/ammonī, מִצְרִי/miṣrī, מֹאבִי/mō’ābī (1/17x - Ezra 9:1)

the definite article and are signified by the sufformative ך/y.²⁸ Most Hebrew gentilics decline to match the noun they are in apposition with,²⁹ but this is not always the case;³⁰ and there is at least one gentilic that does not decline at all.³¹ Both gentilics and adjectives can be proper (or determinate) and common, which does not always come across in translation.³²

Gentilics, Demonyms, and Dehumanics

Though classified as gentilics, there are some HB/ANE adjectives that are better described as demonyms.³³ Amorites and Canaanites (and arguably Hittites) fall in this category.

²⁸ Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar*, § 88Mg and 137b.

²⁹ E.g. Moabite is identified fem. in HALOT; Egyptian has no identified root gender; Canaanite (appears seventy-three times in seventy-one verses, only thrice it is feminine plural, and thrice masculine plural. The remainder of the time it appears with the gentilic ך, which can be singular or a collective plural). חת occurs 48 times in 47 verses. It is identified as feminine in HALOT, BDB offers no gender designation. It never carries the singular gentilic feminine sufformative. Forty-five times it has the simple adjectival sufformative, three times the word is masculine plural, two times it occurs as feminine plural (both instances in Ezek 16, when he is describing a mother).

³⁰ Philistines and Caphtorim are exceptions to the definite article rule for gentilics, Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar*, § 137c. Canaanite (Obah 20; and Zech 14:21), Moabite (Deut 23:3; throughout Ruth; and Neh. 13:1); Amorite (Num 21:29; and Ezek 16:45); and Hittite (Ezek 16:3 and 45). Exceptions to the sufformative are found in several instances, particularly when the plural ending is used rather than the adjectival sufformative (e.g. Gen 19:37, Judg 3:28, in 2 Sam 8:2 and 1 Kgs 11:1 Moabite and other gentilics appear without a definite article or adjectival sufformative). Proper nouns are themselves determinates and do not require a definite article, Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar*, § 137b.

³¹ E.g. יְבוּסִי/yəbūśī "Jebusite"

³² An example of a gentilic as an adjective can be found in Ezekiel's attack in 16:45 concerning the ancestry of Jerusalem "your mother was a Hittite and your father an Amorite." It may be translated as "your mother was godless and your father a barbarian." Translating Hittite as "godless" in Ezekiel 16:45 finds support in how Sargon II's scribes referred to the people of Syria and Palestine as Hittites in "Bull Inscription I" (and in other texts) describing them as "without respect for the command of the gods," J. D. Hawkins, "Assyrians and Hittites," *Iraq* 36, no. 1/2 (1974): 67. Translating Amorite as "hick" looks to Scott's discussion on how Assyrians viewed Amorites, the very term developing as descriptive meaning "barbarians," Scott, *Against the Grain*, 136. In Ezekiel 16:45 it may be argued that the terms Hittite and Amorite are dehumanics rather than gentilics and the general idea is that Jerusalem descends from the *uncivilized*.

³³ Gentilic: "of or relating to a noun or adjective that denotes ethnic or national affiliation;"

Demonym: "a word (such as *Nevadan* or *Sooner*) used to denote a person who inhabits or is native to a particular place." Gentilic;" and "Demonym," Merriam-Webster Dictionary, accessed January 9, 2019. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary>.

These gentilic titles lump multiple groups of people from large geographic regions together and appear to be political rather than familial;³⁴ additionally, these adjectives include peoples who identify with and are referred to by more precise national and tribal gentilic titles.

Despite both Canaanites and Amorites appearing regularly in the HB and other ANE texts neither peoples are described as descending from a specific tribe outside of the biblical text nor is a specific nationality applied to them.³⁵ Rather, Amorite is "a geographical or political term," and Canaanite is a collective term describing different areas at various times in ancient history.³⁶ Scott, in his book *Against the Grain*, discusses barbarians in the ancient world. He notes that many of these *barbarian* peoples are given their monikers as descriptions of the people. Notably, for the purposes of this work, he identifies the Amorites as barbarians due to how they were described in Mesopotamian writings. referenced in Mesopotamian writings.³⁷ The Amorites are among the most listed *others* in the HB. Appearing in eighty-six verses, twenty-ones times in conjunction with Canaanites and Hittites.³⁸

³⁴ HALOT אמרי p. 68, כנעני p. 485.

³⁵ BDB does note that אמרי are called the sons of Canaan, who is the son of Ham (Gen 10:16 and 1 Chr 1:14), pp. 57 and 488, but this is not corroborated outside of the biblical text.

³⁶ Cf. HALOT אמרי p. 68, כנעני p. 485.

³⁷ "The term *barbarian*, though originally intended to be derogatory, is to be understood as "those outside of the state," Scott, *Against the Grain*, 136-137.

³⁸ Though not demonized in Genesis, the remainder of appearances in the HB concern the removal of the Amorites from the "promised land" and accusations concerning their abominable religion to be avoided. Extra biblical sources bear witness to the fall and disappearance (likely assimilation) of the Amorites as having taken place during the period of the conquest. Their stories possibly surviving the assimilation as oral tradition. Though arguments are often made that a disappeared society's traditions are unlikely to appear several hundred years after said peoples *disappearance*, researchers and scientists are discovering that oral traditions are capable of being preserved for far longer periods of time than what had previously been assumed, Patrick D. Nunn, "Ancient Stories Could Be More Fact Than Fiction," *Discover Magazine*, Oct. 23, 2018, accessed Dec. 23, 2018, http://blogs.discovermagazine.com/crux/2018/10/23/ancient-stories-more-fact-than-fiction/?utm_source=dscfb&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=dscfb&fbclid=IwAR225Hk8QO9S3m69v2Wyd02MlAIAIrgWkT0iwhsqZuvHGSC_8qTznE8e9_s#.XDbusM9Kh25

Gentilic adjectives that describe people of "mixed" descent fall under the dehumanic umbrella. Contemporary examples of this exist in titles such as Hapa, Melungeon, Mulatto, and Mestizo. Often with derogatory etymologies and intents, some of these terms literally come from words that mean "half" or "mixed,"³⁹ while Mulatto is derived from the Spanish word for mule.⁴⁰ To understand פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* as a dehumanic also addresses a glaring issue Bal points out, "Boling [and others] distorts the text when he translates: 'he took to himself a concubine, a woman from Bethlehem. His reversal is understandable indeed: once we assume the translation has to be 'concubine,' then the textual order 'he took to himself a woman, a concubine from Bethlehem' does not seem to make much sense."⁴¹ Yet, treating it as a demonym and translating אִשָּׁה/*iššā* as wife leads to a natural statement, "he took a wife for himself, a Pilagshean from Bethlehem."

I propose the following lexical entry (an adaptation of *HALOT*)

פִּילֶגֶשׁ, פִּילֶגֶשׁ: adj. פִּלְג + אִישׁ "divided person," or פִּלְג + אִישׁ "set apart/aside to grope/touch". SamP. *filgāš*, pl. *filgāšam*, Greek πάλλαξ, παλλακίς, Latin *pellex*; JArm. פִּלְקֶתָא; Syr. *plq* (uncertain vocalisation, Brockelmann *Lex.* 576a); Arb. n.f. *Bilqīs* the Queen of Sheba (Saba): sg. with suffix פִּילֶגֶשׁ־וֹ, פִּילֶגֶשׁ־וֹ, pl. פִּילֶגֶשִׁים (Michel *Grundlegung* 1:36), פִּילֶגֶשׁ־וֹ, with suffix פִּילֶגֶשִׁים־וֹ. 1. — **Pilagshean**, indigenous people of the Levant; a title for the un-genealogized; acceptable not preferable — **peasant**: of נָחֹר Gn 22²⁴, אֲבָרָה Gn 25⁶, יַעֲקֹב Gn 35²², אֱלִיפַז Gn 36¹², אִישׁ Ju 19^{1f.9f.24-29} 20⁴⁻⁶, נָשׂא 2S 3⁷ 21¹¹, in pl., of בְּנֵי 2S 5¹³ 15¹⁶ 16^{21f} 19⁶ 20³; Solomon's three hundred locals 1K 11³, חֲמִשָּׁתִּים פִּילֶגֶשִׁים eighty peasants Song 6^{8f}, Est 2¹⁴. 2. — **barbarian**,

³⁹ Mestizo - Spanish "mixed" Merriam-Webster Dictionary, accessed January 9, 2019. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Mestizo>; Hapa - "a Hawaiian word for 'part'," from the Japanese term *haafu* "half," originally applied to a person of Japanese and Hawaiian decent, but "has spread beyond the islands to describe anyone who's part Asian or Pacific Islander," Johnson, "Who Gets to be 'Hapa'?" *NPR*. August, 8, 2016; Melungeon: "most likely derived from the French *mélange*, or mixed people," Schrift, *Becoming Melungeon*. 6.

⁴⁰ Mulatto: "1) *now sometimes offensive*: the first-generation offspring of a black person and a white person 2) *now sometimes offensive*: a person of mixed white and black ancestry," Merriam-Webster Dictionary, accessed January 9, 2019. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mulatto>.

⁴¹ Bal, *Death and Dissymmetry*, 84.

savage, half-person: אֶלִּיפּוֹ 36¹², of מַמְצָרִים Ezk 23²⁰. 3. —**concubine** (Plautz ZAW 75 (1963) 9–13): of אֶבְרָהָם 1C 1³²; of קָלֵב 1C 246.48, in pl., of דָּוִד 1C 3⁹; מְנַשֶּׁה 1C 7¹⁴; of רְחַבְעָם; 2C 11²¹. †

SEX AND GENDER

There is a presumption by scholars and translators concerning the sex and therefore the translation of the term פִּילגֶשֶׁת/*pīlegeš*. That assumption is that it refers to women. In one instance (Ezek 23:20) the term refers to men without question. Both lexicographers and translators treat this occurrence in the HB differently than any other, with the most common translations being "lovers" or "paramours."⁴² The word itself never has a feminine ending, the presumption is, then, that it is an "endingless feminine."⁴³ As the word only pluralizes masculine and the only instance in the DtrH that we have of a group of distinctly female פִּילגֶשֶׁת/*pīlegeš* (2 Sam. 5:13, cf. 19:6), the text makes a gender distinction, treating פִּילגֶשֶׁת/*pīlagšîm* as a modifier of the noun.⁴⁴ If a presumption is to be made based on context and linguistic practice, the reader should presume that the gender of the word is masculine and that it can also refer to females. To make this point let us look at an example of its plural usage in the DtrH.

⁴² HALOT offers a separate entry for the Ezekiel usage, but offers no explanation: "text uncertain, masc. pl. פִּילגֶשֶׁת ? their lovers;" BDB: "either = *paramour* (perhaps contempt.; ὁ πάλλαξ = *youth*), or < *concubinage*;" KJV, NKJV, ESV, NASB, RSV, ASV, YLT, DBY, WEB, and HNV = "paramours;" NLT, NIV, and CSB = "lovers;" NET removes the word entirely; LXX = Χαλδαῖοις "Chaldeans;" VUL = concubitus n. m. "lying together, copulation."

⁴³ There are one hundred sixty-five endingless feminine nouns in the HB, only forty-four of these occur more than ten times. Of these, eight take a masculine plural form, count done in Miles V. Van Pelt, and Gary Davis Pratico, *The Vocabulary Guide to Biblical Hebrew* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2003), 150-152. Of these תור, ככר, עז, עיר, פעם, and אבן take exclusively feminine adjectives and/or verbs; while צפרדע, כד, and פִּילגֶשֶׁת/*pīlegeš* take masculine, feminine, and/or common verbs and adjectives. At the very least leaving the gender question unanswerable.

⁴⁴ This happens with the singular use of the term as well cf. Judges 19:1. Arguably the term's use in Esther 2:14 falls into this category as well: הָיָא נְשִׁבָה אֶל־בֵּית הַנָּשִׁים שְׁנֵי אֶל־יָד שְׁעָשְׂגוּ קָרִים הַמֶּלֶךְ שֶׁמֶר הַפִּילגֶשֶׁתִּים, "She returned to the house of the second wives, to the hand of Shaashgaz, the high official/eunuch of the king, the one who protected the Pilagsheans."

The pluralized form of פִּילגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* only appears in the DtrH in the cases of David's and Solomon's פִּילגֶשִׁים/*pīlagšīm*.⁴⁵ The first example the focus will be on David's פִּילגֶשִׁים/*pīlagšīm* as they receive more attention by PRDtr. In the David thread, פִּילגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* is a substantive adjective (2 Sam 5:13; 16:21-22; and 19:6) and a modifier of women (15:16 and 20:3). e.g.:⁴⁶ וַיִּקַּח דָּוִד עוֹד פִּלְגֶשִׁים, “And David took more Pilagshean”⁴⁷ (2 Sam. 5:13, cf. 19:6) and וַיַּעֲזֹב הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת עֶשְׂרֵי נָשִׁים פִּלְגֶשִׁים לְשָׁמֵר הַבַּיִת, “And the king left ten Pilagshean women to guard the house” (2 Sam 15:16, cf. 20:3).

In the first verse the gender of the פִּילגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* is assumed female by ancient and contemporary audiences despite the adjectival modifier taking a masculine form.⁴⁸ It is far more likely that this was a mixed gender group as the instances in which a פִּילגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* is used for sex, the text is unambiguous.⁴⁹ In 15:16 and 20:3 the narrator makes clear that ten women, who

⁴⁵ If we are to presume that פִּילגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* is particularly a sexual intimacy role, then its use in these two instances would have other implications. However, there is nothing in either texts that states that David or Solomon was having sexual relations with the פִּילגֶשִׁים/*pīlagšīm*. A female sexual presumption is unfounded outside of the DtrH as well, for example in Ezekiel 23 it is distinctly masculine, in Song of Songs the verb used with queens and פִּילגֶשִׁים/*pīlagšīm* is masculine plural (6:9), and in Esther there is a distinction between the women and the פִּילגֶשִׁים/*pīlagšīm* (2:14). These will be discussed in greater detail below. Its use in Chronicles is exceptional, wherein one sees the Hellenistic influence. This is the final appropriation and adaptation of the term; it too will be treated below.

⁴⁶ 2 Samuel is the first instance no gender is specified outside of the word itself in the DtrH.

⁴⁷ While translating the term פִּילגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* is appropriate in certain situations as a dehumanic or class of women (as will be explored more fully below and in chapter 5), its use in the DtrH, Esther, and Song of Songs should be treated as a demonym and therefore transliterated with an adjectival suffix. The choice to use the "-ean" suffix is rooted in the translation practices for כַּשְׂדִּים/*kasdīm*. כַּשְׂדִּים/*kasdīm* shares several similarities with פִּילגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* 1) despite being recognized as a gentilic/demonym it takes a traditional masculine plural suffix rather than an adjectival gentilic suffix, 2) it is not always used as a gentilic, as in some cases it describes a vocation that denotes a certain class of people and is translated appropriately, 3) it is used in Ezekiel 23 as a dehumanic (where פִּילגֶשִׁים/*pīlagšīm* is first written and used as a dehumanic).

⁴⁸ The gender assumption is likely due to the use of לָקַח/*lāqah* in vs 5:13. However, the presence of this term does not necessarily imply a sexual relationship cf. Judg 6:27; 1 Sam 8:14 and 16; 2 Kgs 4:1 (not a comprehensive list but offers a few examples of the term as it is used in the DtrH for the acquiring of humans without necessarily being about sex).

⁴⁹ There are three instances in the DtrH when sexual penetration of פִּילגֶשִׁים/*pīlagšīm* is explicit stated: Judges 19:25 – the men "knew" the פִּילגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*; 2 Sam 3:7 - Ish-Boshet made the accusation that Abner "went

were פילגשים/*pīlagšîm* were left behind. Absalom "goes into" the פילגשים/*pīlagšîm* David left behind (not just *any* פילגשים/*pīlagšîm*, 16:21-22). David puts away as widows the ten women who Absalom entered (20:3). In the second verse the gender is clearly stated as "ten women" modified by פילגש/*pīlegeš*, these are the women who are raped by Absalom and eventually put away by David.⁵⁰ If the assumption that פילגש/*pīlegeš* is an irregular feminine, then there would be no reason to identify their gender.

In the case of Solomon's פלגשים/*pīlagšîm* the adjectival modifiers are feminine, which leads to a possible translation of "three hundred female Pilagshean."

UNIVERSAL MEANING OF פילגש/*PĪLEGESĤ*

Language is fluid and constantly evolving.⁵¹ The meaning of a word is influenced by its previous usage as well as its contemporary vernacular usage, this includes location, politics, and

into" Saul's פילגש/*pīlegeš*; and 2 Sam. 16:22-23 - Absalom "went into" the פילגשים/*pīlagšîm* David left behind. There are two instances in which sexual contact is presumed, though not explicitly stated, as offspring are reported: Judg 8:31 - Gideon/Jerubbaal sired Abimelech through an unnamed פילגש/*pīlegeš*; 2 Sam. 21:8 - Rizpah had two sons in Saul's house.

T.M. Lemos offers a thorough analysis of whether or not women were considered chattel in Ancient Israel. He concludes that though they were subordinate to men the wives were not property, "Women Chattel?" 241. However, here the פילגשים/*pīlagšîm* are not described as wives, rather they would have been captives of war in which case they would have been slaves; cf. Raymond Westbrook, "The Female Slave," in *Gender and Law in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*, Victor Harold Matthews, Bernard M. Levinson, and Tikva Simone Frymer-Kensky eds. JSOTSup, 262, (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998).

⁵⁰ The purpose of this narrative will be discussed below in chapter five, for now the point I that am making is that there is no linguistic or textual evidence that leads to the conclusion that פילגש/*pīlegeš* is feminine and that we should take it at face value that it is masculine, as the author makes a special point to note the gender in cases where the story necessitates it due to the ambiguity of the term and the possibility of understanding encounters as homosexual.

⁵¹ It is important to underscore that there are many words out of the 1900+ lexemes used more than ten times that have one clear meaning such as כוהן, זרה, עם, דם, אהל, and מזבח to name a few, this is the exception not the rule. These words are uncontested and have similar meanings in cognate languages. When dealing with פילגש/*pīlegeš* it is clear to many scholars that the translation, "concubine" is inappropriate, cf. chapter 2. As Exum notes, translations or definitions offered in one instance do not seem to apply to every use of the word, *Fragmented Women*, 141 fn.

A parallel example of this is found in James Barr's review of TDOT, 2. He critiques the entry on גלה,

economic background of the person using the word. Linguistic changes happen over time and a lexeme can maintain its older identity during the time of its adaptation.⁵² Over time the new usage picks up speed and the older usage eventual disappears.⁵³ This happens twice in the development of פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*. There was a slow adoption period followed by a time of frequent usage and development culminating in a solid definition. Its creation and initial use as a derogatory term (Ezekiel and Genesis) was overtaken by its use as a demonym (though still reflecting a lower class), with consistent use over a century (Judges, Samuel, Kings, Esther, and Song). This new, last, and most influential definition of פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* came about as a result of Greek influence. Partly due to the non-existence of the Pilagshean by the time Chronicles was written (due to their assimilation and/or expulsion), and the exoticizing work of fourth and fifth-century Greek philosophers and historians like Herodotus and Clearchus of Soli, who accused the Persians and Medes of having παλλακη,⁵⁴ keeping harems overseen by eunuchs.⁵⁵ This late redefining of the term פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* had a great impact on how it was understood in earlier writings leading to an "availability cascade" bias that would alter how the term was read and translated for thousands of years. This presumption that פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* had one meaning in every

pointing out the fallacy in attempting to define a word singularly. Going so far as to suggest that this word has two distinct translations and should therefore receive two separate entries. In his view an historical-philological connection of the two words does not justify their continued pairing in a dictionary, Barr, James. 1979. "Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament v 2 Bdl-Galah." *Interpretation* 33 (1): 90–91. <https://search-ebscohost-com.fuller.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lsdar&AN=ATLA0000476368&site=ehost-live>.

⁵² John Srenock and Robert D Holmstedt, *Esther: A Handbook on the Hebrew Text*, Baylor Handbook on the Hebrew Bible (Waco, Texas: Baylor University Press, 2015), 21.

⁵³ Srenock and Holmstedt, *Esther*, 21.

⁵⁴ Its use undoubtedly by this point meaning "concubine"

⁵⁵ A. Shapur Shahbazi, "Harem: I. In Ancient Iran," *EI* 11, no. 6, 671-672 and 12, no. 1, 1, 1-3; available online at <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/harem-i>. Cf. Herodotus, *The History of Herodotus*, parallel English/Greek, tr. G. C. Maculay (1890), i, 135; <https://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/hh/hh1130.htm>.

situation is not only a result of dismissal of the subjects described by the term, it also is poor execution of linguistics. To this point, what follows offers further explanation and support for multiple, context based, translations of the term.

PREDECESSOR AND ANTECEDENT BIBLICAL TEXTS

While a full synchronic exegetical breakdown of the PRDtrH is presented in chapter four (using traditional biblical exegetical methods), and a second diachronic exegetical analysis of PRDtrH will appear in chapter 5 (applying less traditional methods), it is pertinent to note where in the biblical canon these passages existed on the etymological timeline. The PRDtrH entered the text to be canonized in the postexilic period after the bulk of the composition of Ezekiel and Genesis had been done, but before Esther and Song of Songs were written. What follows is a proposed order of composition of פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* threads and a proposed etymological path of the term. This section will treat the history of the term's usage through the development of several layers of biblical tradition.

The first appearance of פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* can be dated to the late sixth-century BCE (Ezek 23:20) with its last appearance in the HB possibly dating no earlier than the late fifth-century BCE (2 Chr 11:21).⁵⁶ I set out to show that the first appearances of the term are unquestionably derogatory, meaning something to the effect of "half-person" or "savage." We will see that its use in other cases was as a descriptor for people from the Southern Levant who were acceptable to procreate with but not as rulers and is best translated as "local" or "peasant." The first serious

⁵⁶ Dating the פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* passages will be expanded on below.

adaptation is best reflected with its treatment as the demonym, Pilagshean.⁵⁷ Support for this will be offered in the discussion of the passages from Esther and Song of Songs; this took place during the last century of the Persian Period the term was accepted as a demonym used concerning the peasants of Yehud.⁵⁸ It eventually fell out of use and was reintroduced (through cursory readings of existent writings under Hellenistic influence). In the last intra-biblical discussion of פִּלְגֶשֶׁת/*pīlegeš* concerning the Chronicler's use of the term, I will present the possibility of how Ze/they was influenced by Greek exoticism of Persian royal life,⁵⁹ mistook the term and presumed it to be a sexual role for women leading to the acceptance of "concubine," which in turn effected the meaning of the Greek term *παλλακής/pallakēs*.⁶⁰

Though Redaction and Source Criticism have worked on dating specific texts in each of the books that contain the term פִּלְגֶשֶׁת/*pīlegeš* and there is no definitive statement that its appearance be treated as first being used in Genesis with each consecutive usage built upon the previous, there is no definitive statement stating the opposite either. This lack of scholarly discussion and statement may unwittingly lead those dealing with the term in a specific context to presume the former. This is to say the natural assumption of the commentator and reader becomes: Genesis comes first synchronically, therefore it should inform everything following it.

⁵⁷ While popularly gentilics and demonyms are transcribed in English translations with the "-ite" suffix, this is not always the case, cf. Chaldees (Gen 11:28, 31, 15:7; Ezek11:24, 16:29, 23:16); Rephaim, Zuzim, Emim, and Anakim (Gen 14:5, Deut 2:10); as well as Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim (Gen 25:3).

⁵⁸ In contrast to "Jew," which reflected those who could trace their genealogy to one of the ruling tribes descended from Jacob. By the composition of Esther the term had reached a point comparable to those used to describe other people groups, notably the use of the definite article.

⁵⁹ Herodotus uses the term *παλλακάς/pallakas* on several occasions to Persian women. Its first appearance suggests a contrast between wives and *παλλακάς/pallakas* in some cases these women bear children, they are also described in terms of appearing wealthy, *Histories*, 1:135, 7:83, 107, 187; 9:76, 81

⁶⁰ Cf. Rabin's work on the etymology of European and late Semitic terms translated as "concubine," "*Pīlegeš*," 353-357.

This is not due to any particular short-coming, rather it can be attributed to the brain's desire to be efficient, therefore choosing the easiest conclusion.⁶¹

What unfolds below is a diachronic reading of the biblical text, in which I set out to uncover a dynamic linguistic history. The proposed chronological usage of פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* is as follows: Ezekiel used the term in the exilic period; it entered the vocabulary of the compilers and redactors of Genesis who solidified a definition for the term. Due to its incorporation into Genesis, פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* was likely in regular use in Yehud during the compiling and redaction of the DtrH where the term was used both derogatorily and embraced as an act of resistance. In Song of Songs its usage was similar to those in Ezekiel and Genesis. Esther, however, is a turning point, as פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* moves from non-specific demonym to appearing with the definite article. In a pivotal linguistic moment the Chronicler picked up פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* and adapted its usage from that of a demonym to a female of child bearers. What follows is translation and analysis of every non-DtrH text that contains פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* in a proposed chronological order. In an attempt to break away from its long history of affiliation with "concubinage" and the assumptions around part of speech and gender, פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* will be translated as "savage," "barbarian," "local," "Pilagshean," and "monogamous mistress."

EZEKIEL

I propose that the first record of use of פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* can be found in Ezekiel, which was penned in the early sixth-century BCE. With a literal meaning of "half-person" (with the pun:

⁶¹ i.e. Someone else has ordered these books and there is a basic knowledge of when each is said to take place in history; therefore, the appearance of פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* corresponds generally these same dates.

"segregated groper").⁶² His intended purpose for this chapter was to devalue the Jerusalem elite (Oholibah) and to dehumanize Egyptians. The non-literal translation of "savages" gets at the heart of the term while being easily understood by contemporary readers without being cumbersome or wooden.

Ezekiel 23:20

And she lustedⁱ over their savages whose dicks were donkeys' dicks and whose cum was horses' cum.

i. Desired lasciviously/sensuously, lusted/doted/panted after, coveted

Ezekiel was among the first captives taken from Jerusalem to Babylon between 597 and 587 BCE, where he penned the book given his name.⁶³ At the time of writing there were those who had not been taken out of Jerusalem to Babylon. According to Yee, Ezekiel had no soft spot for those left behind, she notes that he strongly disliked Jeremiah who eventually escaped to Egypt.⁶⁴ Ezekiel was very critical of Israel and Judah's political and religious interactions with non-YHWHstic groups. Ezekiel's disgust with Israel and Judah consorting with these forces is displayed in peak form in chapters 23. Here it is made clear that Ezekiel believed this external influence was the cause of destruction of the nations of YHWH.

In chapter 23 is found the overt metaphor of Oholah and Oholibah, sisters who represent Samaria and Judah. Ezekiel called these sisters תַּזְנוּת/*taznût* (vv 7, 8, 11, 14, 17, 18, 19, 29, 35,

⁶² נִשְׁחָטָה/ṣḥ + פִּלְג/p_{lg} - literally meaning "divided/part/half person." The meaning is multivalent conveying the idea of "half human" while at the same time recognizing the origin of the people described as the those separated or divided out during the exile (those who were left behind) "division of the people." Expanded explanation in Appendix A.

נִשְׁחָטָה/ḡṣṣ + פִּלְה/pl_h - literally meaning "set apart/aside for/to grope/touch". As is the case with "half/divided human," this definition is multivalent. It can refer to the blind groping of non-YHWHists, and it has the pun-ability of meaning "one set aside to touch."

⁶³ Kathryn Pfisterer Darr, "Ezekiel," *Women's Bible Commentary*, expanded edition, Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe eds., (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 192.

⁶⁴ Private conversation with Yee (check email for date).

43),⁶⁵ and lusting after (vv 5, 7, 9, 12, 16, 20) lovers (vv 5, 9) who were the Assyrians (vv. 5, 7, 9, 12, 23) and Babylonians (vv 16, and 23)⁶⁶ among other very explicit sexual acts. Oholibah was worse than her sister and added the savages (v 20), who either were or belonged to the Egyptians (vv 19, 21), to her lusting.

The choice to translate פלגשיהם/*pilagšêhem* as "her lovers" or "her paramours" could be defended as it may appear that it is parallels מאהבי in vv 5 and 7. However, there are several distinctions that should give the reader pause in presuming a simple or escalating parallel: 1) the lovers were hers (vv 5 and 7), the savages belonged to the Egyptians (vv 19 and 20); 2) Ezekiel described the actions of Oholibah as worse than Oholah's in v 19, specifically because she lusted over something more carnal; 3) there is a distinction that these well-endowed men were of Egypt (vv 19, 21) rather than Babylonian; 4) this is all followed by a clear statement concerning who the "lovers" are – they are from the east (v 22). All of this combine with the knowledge that Ezekiel had a particular dislike of the Egyptians (due to what he views as the direct cause of the fall of Jerusalem)⁶⁷ leads to the conclusion that the particular offense of Oholibah is that she is intimate with an uncivilized people. She is just screwing, she isn't even trying to gain power, as her sister had done.

⁶⁵ This term only occurs in Ezekiel chapters 16 and 23. Likely from the root זנא/zānâ. זנא/zānâ is a questionable term often translated as something having to do with sex, prostitution, and whoredom, tertiarily under investigation in this work as a similar accusation is lobbed at the פלגש/pīlegeš in Judges 19. Berquist suggests this term means something to the effect of businessperson, Family and Household, Lecture Series. Several scholars questions the assumed translation of whore or harlot addressing the topic in Schneider, *Judges*, 32; Soggin, *Judges*, 284; Bal, *Death and Dissymmetry*, 82; Exum, *Fragmented Women*, 142-143. For the present purpose it is important to note that Ezekiel had a habit of adapting existing words to his own devices (cf. Hittite).

⁶⁶ Which included all the Chaldeans, Pekod, Shoa, and Koa, as specified in v 22. These were sub-groups under the Babylonian umbrella.

⁶⁷ Based on the history of the region in which Jehoiakim and later Zedekiah allies Judah with Egypt and their attempted revolt against Babylon that led to the surrender of Judah to Babylon. For historical background see Darr, "Ezekiel," 192; Gale Yee, *Poor Banished Children of Eve: Woman As Evil in the Hebrew Bible*, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press. 2003), 112-116.

The accusations against Oholah are similar to that of Oholibah with key differences. Oholah "lusted **over her** lovers" (v 5), "was defiled by all of **their** idols" (v 7), and was delivered "into the hands of **her** lovers, the hands of the sons of Assyria" by YHWH (v. 9). Ezekiel repeatedly states that Oholibah was worse than Oholah: "she became more spoiled in her lust" (v 11) and though both sisters were spoiled in the same way,⁶⁸ Oholibah increased her תזנות/*taznût* (v 14), "**for** the sons of Assyria she lusted" (v 12). It is significant to note that the Assyrians, Babylonians, and Chaldeans are not called Oholibah's lovers (מֵאֲהָבָי/*mě'ahābay*) until verse 22; though they went to her, "to the bed of lovers (דֹּדִים/*dōdīm*)," spoiled her with their תזנות/*taznût* (v 17), and "lovers" (מֵאֲהָבָי/*mě'ahābay*) is never used to describe her relationship with the Egyptians. The escalated accusations against Oholibah are pornographic,⁶⁹ she is not motivated by *love* or even *power*; her motivations are entirely carnal and base.⁷⁰ This culminates in her lusting after savages who only offer animalistic pleasure. Her punishment is that she will be attacked by the eastern "lovers" (v 22), who she hates (vv 28 & 29), in order that her lewdness from her youth in Egypt stop and that she would no longer remember Egypt.

Though the images of the easterners entice her in verses 14 and 15, in this whole pericope verse 20 is the only place in which the bodies of the sex objects are described. The descriptions of the "lovers" suggest "civilized" enticements - they are governors, princes, they have wealth

⁶⁸ In both cases Ezekiel mentions the ranks of the Assyrians - governors, rulers, horsemen (vv 6 and 12)

⁶⁹ The pornographic nature of this text is discussed by Athalya Brenner, 'On "Jeremiah" and the Poetics of (Prophetic?) Pornography' in *On Gendering Texts: Female and Male Voices in the Hebrew Bible*, edited by Athalya Brenner and Fokkelien van Dijk-Hemmes (Leiden: Brill, 1993): 177-193; Fokkelien van Dijk-Hemmes, "The Metaphorization of Woman in Prophetic Speech: An Analysis of Ezekiel Xxiii," *Vetus Testamentum* 43, no. 2 (April 1993): 168; Andrew Sloane, "Aberrant Textuality?: The Case of Ezekiel the (Porno) Prophet," *Tyndale Bulletin* 59, no. 1 (2008): 53-76; Bryan D. Bibb, "There's No Sex in Your Violence: Patriarchal Translation in Ezekiel 16 and 23," *Review & Expositor* 111, no. 4 (December 2014): 342-45.

⁷⁰ She **sees** images (v 14) and lusted after people who are described animalistically.

(vv 6, 12, 15, 23, 24) whereas the Egyptians have savages with big dicks and loads of cum. Ezekiel is using the well-documented tactic of dehumanization through accusations of animalistic sexuality to illicit disgust.⁷¹ If this is indeed the first documented appearance of פִּלְגֶשׁ/pilegeš in the HB, one would be hard pressed to defend the definitions "concubine" or "second-wife," and of course none of the translations consulted here uses either of those.⁷²

GENESIS

Here I will show that the פִּלְגֶשׁ/pilegeš passages in Genesis were the closest to the Ezekiel's work in time, meaning, and social position of redactor.⁷³ The overarching purpose of Genesis is to point to the origin of the Hebrew/Jewish people and to explain the "right"

⁷¹ The fetishizing and dehumanizing of the other is discussed in many fields. Randall C. Bailey discusses its use in the Torah specifically concerning the Hamites, who he identifies as Egyptians and Canaanites, "They're Nothing but Incestuous Bastards," *Reading from This Place*, Fernando F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert eds., (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995) 121-138. Psychologists have noted its existence in western and eastern settings, Robin Wollast, Elisa Puvia, Philippe Bernard, Passagorn Tevichapong, and Olivier Klein, "How Sexual Objectification Generates Dehumanization in Western and Eastern Cultures: A Comparison between Belgium and Thailand," *Swiss Journal of Psychology* 77, no. 2 (April 2018): 69–82, doi:10.1024/1421-0185/a000209. David Livingstone Smith highlights that the phenomenon's complexities, "Paradoxes of Dehumanization," *Social Theory and Practice* 42, no. 2 (2016), 416-43, <http://www.jstor.org.fuller.idm.oclc.org/stable/24871350>. Rachel Ama Asaa Engmann the covert fetishizing that has occurred in the name of anthropology under colonial rule, "Under Imperial Eyes, Black Bodies, Buttocks, and Breasts: British Colonial Photography and Asante 'Fetish Girls,'" *African Arts* 45, no. 2 (2012): 46-57, <http://www.jstor.org.fuller.idm.oclc.org/stable/23276801>. And Kat George notes the commonness of the practice in, "Kim Kardashian's Paper Magazine Shoot Has an Insanely Troubling Racial Problem That You Probably Have No Idea About," *Bustle*, (Nov 13, 2014). <https://www.bustle.com/articles/49066-kim-kardashians-paper-magazine-shoot-has-an-insanely-troubling-racial-problem-that-you-probably-have-no>

Sweeney suggests that Ezekiel was pointed in this purpose to illicit disgust in his writing for the male audience "that apparently harbored fantasies about Egyptian/African men," which relies on the "common-knowledge" assumption concerning the longstanding fetishizing of peoples from the African continent, *Ezekiel*, 118.

⁷² The LXX replaces the term with τοὺς Χαλδαίους, "the Chaldeans," which may highlight the success of the adaptation of פִּלְגֶשׁ/pilegeš in later writings.

⁷³ The redactors of the Pilagshean Thread(s) within Genesis (PTGen) were likely the repatriating educated of the Babylonian Jewish community, working between 539 and 400 BCE. They were at the very least sympathetic to the priests and those repatriating from Babylon under Persian rule. The contemporary redaction work on these particular passages notably recognizes them all as 'P' source material, without necessarily linking them all together as a specific ribbon within the text. Cf. Gerhard von Rad identified all the PTGen as Priestly, *Genesis: A Commentary*. Revised ed. John H Marks, trans., OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972), 261-262; 342; 344.

genealogy for the nation. Aside from a few instances of overtly anti-imperial rhetoric pointed at the eastern colonizers,⁷⁴ the synchronic purpose of Genesis was the lifting up of the "pure" eastern line coming from Terah as the only legitimate inhabitants and rulers of the Southern Levant. Reading the פִּילְגֶשֶׁם/*pîlegeš* texts through this lens addresses the confusion surrounding the role of פִּילְגֶשֶׁם/*pîlagšîm* in Genesis as well as addressing the ambiguity around the rights of inheritance for the children of the פִּילְגֶשֶׁם/*pîlagšîm*. In Genesis the פִּילְגֶשֶׁם/*pîlagšîm* texts (at least in part) exist to purposely disenfranchise the tribes that inhabit the land in order for those with an Eastern connection to obtain it.

It is difficult to say which Genesis passage should be considered first. Therefore, for the sake of content continuity, the פִּילְגֶשֶׁם/*pîlagšîm* of Genesis will be addressed in order of similarities to Ezekiel's use of the term. In this way Reuben's encounter with Bilhah has the greatest number of parallels to Ezekiel.

Bilhah Genesis 35:22a and 49:4

With the greatest number of parallels to Ezekiel, it makes sense to address this verse first. Many have discussed Genesis 35:22a in terms of inheritance and lineage, suggesting the possibility that Reuben's sexual relationship with Bilhah was a move to gain power.⁷⁵ Genesis

⁷⁴ Arguably the Cain and Abel story shows the deity's preference for shepherds while highlighting the true barbarity of the "civilized" grain growers; and the Tower of Babel episode is anti-imperialistic, as a polemic against a lingua Franca and centralization, cf. Bernard W. Anderson, "Unity and Diversity in God's Creation: A study of the Babel Story," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 5 (1978): 69-81; and Kathleen A. Farmer, "What is 'This' They Begin to Do?" *Preaching Biblical Texts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans: 1995), 26.

⁷⁵ To name a few: Steinberg, *Kinship and Marriage*, 112-113; Bill T. Arnold, *Genesis*, New Cambridge Bible Commentary, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 306; Sarna, *Genesis*, 244; Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis*, Interpretation, a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching, (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), 284.

35:22a records "And it came to pass, while Israel resided in that land, Reuben went and had sex with Bilhah, his father's savage."

It is unclear, from the text, why Reuben would have slept with Bilhah. As first born he would not need to take any particular action to gain his birthright or inheritance; if this was the motivation it was a move that notably backfired, as comes to light in 49:4. The subjects of inheritance and lineage are reasonable items to discuss with regard to the sexual encounter⁷⁶ described in 35:22a (and 49:4) when read in light of v 49:4, where is it apparent that Reuben's action upon Bilhah was viewed in a negative light.⁷⁷ Initially there is no judgment made concerning the encounter in chapter 36,⁷⁸ despite the author stating that Israel was aware of it. Nor are children noted as having come from this sexual encounter. Reuben is not disinherited; his heirs maintain a place in the promise. So, what was the purpose of this narrative interjection?

Schneider, in *Mothers of Promise*, highlights the key issue of place of origin as a mitigating factor for "proper" pairing for procreation.⁷⁹ She notes that both Zilpah and Bilhah, having come from the same region as Leah and Rachel would qualify as potential wives.⁸⁰ Unlike Leah and Rachel, the patrilineages of Zilpah and Bilhah are not noted.⁸¹ They are

⁷⁶ Schneider suggests the possibility that it was an unwanted advance, *Mothers of Promise*, 135.

⁷⁷ Viewing this verse as having to deal with inheritance and lineage only makes sense if one translates פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* as concubine or second-degree wife. Yet children did not come out of this union. Perhaps it is the point of the redactor that Reuben is led by his lusts going after a barbarian and with no intention of bearing children.

⁷⁸ A point that Von Rad notes bringing him to the conclusion that something is missing from this verse, *Genesis*, 342.

⁷⁹ Schneider, *Mothers of Promise*, 127.

⁸⁰ And are named as such in 37:2, Schneider, *Mothers of Promise*, 136.

⁸¹ Sarah Shectman notes that they and their children are legitimate without question, despite not descending from Bethuel, *Women in the Pentateuch: A Feminist and Source-Critical Analysis*, Hbm, 23, (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009), 127. Though outside the scope and purpose of the present task I recognize that there is a question around the in my choice to acknowledge the Terah lineage of Bethuel and therefore Rebekah and Laban. Shectman refers to the Bethuelite rather than Terah's lineage as being the key for marriageable women suggesting

acceptable mothers of the promise, but this does not mean they would be acceptable if further removed from the line of Terah. This is not a matter of literal quantum; rather it is a literary device intended to guide the audience to the eventual conclusion that there are only four potential *ruling* tribes from Jacob's lineage – Levi, Judah, Joseph, and Benjamin. The accusation here is not that an heir could not come from Bilhah, rather that Reuben's actions were carnal, base ... savage.⁸²

Though Bilhah was once acceptable, the redactors now exclude her. Is there something about Bilhah that excludes her from being a mate for Reuben? Here she is identified as a פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*, “savage/barbarian;” in 49:4 she is called a bed; both terms used in the description of Ohilibah's תַּזְנוּת/*taznūt*.⁸³ It is notable that children are not described as having come from this pairing, Reuben's actions described here are the same as those of Ohilibah's: Reuben is not seeking political power (as suggested by Steinberg, Arnold, and Sarna), outside of what is implicitly “proper,”⁸⁴ he is just having sex.

Though Bilhah is the one demeaned, it is Reuben who is being smeared. Hinted at in labeling Bilhah as a פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*, “savage,” and in the choice of verb usage (שָׁכַב/*šākab*) to describe the sexual contact,⁸⁵ the moral attack is hammered home in Jacob's curse on Reuben

that this can be accounted for as a blending of P and non-P traditions. However, these continuity issues are mostly brushed aside by highlighting region of origin as Schneider does, *Mothers of Promise*, 127.

⁸² There is a nuanced difference between savage and barbarian. Savage implies wild or animalistic, where barbarian is less dehumanizing. Barbarian implies a type of second class of person: not “civilized,” but still partially human.

⁸³ פִּלְגֶשׁ like פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* is used in Ezekiel 23:17 concerning the grotesqueness of Ohilibah.

⁸⁴ Though Assyria and “Chaldea” are both from the east, Assyria originates from Abraham, Chaldea does not; and while Ezekeil condemns both Oholah and Ohilibah for their relations with Assyria, Ohilibah was said to have increased her תַּזְנוּת/*taznūt* by having relations with Chaldeans and פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* (Ez 23:17 and 20).

⁸⁵ Euphemistically, שָׁכַב/*šākab* means “to lie,” but this includes the understanding “to have sexual intercourse,” when appropriate, HALOT, 1487. Here and in Ezekiel 23, the idea is even more carnal. Therefore, I will use “to screw.”

before his death (49:4). The full accusation: just as Ezekiel accused Jerusalem of carnal acts for their own sake, Reuben is accused by the narrator as well as Jacob. Reuben שכב/šākab “screwed” the savage Bilhah, the Egyptians שכב/šākab “screwed” Oholibah (Ezk 23:8), and Reuben and Oholibah engage in sex with פילגש/pīlegeš, “savages.” The redactor makes it clear that the accusation is against Reuben in the retelling of the incident. It is Reuben who is reckless, additionally Bilhah is completely objectified. She is referred to as “the couch of your father” (מישכבי אביך/miškēbē ’ābīkā Gen 49:4).⁸⁶ As one who acts recklessly and carnally (animalistically), Reuben is thus an unfit ancestor of rulers for Israel/Jerusalem.

As can be deduced from Reuben's story, a primary objective for the postexilic redactors of Genesis was to point to proper rulers for the region. This term acted to undermine any tribe attempting to claim elite authority. On many occasions in the HB the presence of פילגש/pīlegeš in a story carried a double meaning, on the one hand it acted to delegitimize the heirs of a powerful person, while having a hidden transcript of pointing at the elite class as being pawns of the empire and abusers of the non-ruling tribes. In the case of Reuben, this tribe was prominent and potentially ruling class tribe that was absorbed by Judah.⁸⁷ David's family, and therefore his tribe, was not highly regarded by many in the postexilic period, as it was a tribe associated with unsavory behavior.⁸⁸ Some repatriates may have attempted to distance themselves from Judah by

⁸⁶ This term appears in Ezekiel's attack of Oholibah (Ezek 23:17 למשכב דדים). A small caveat must be put on the 49:4, Rad attributes the poem this verse is in to ‘J,’ but notes the prose introduction in v 1 is ‘P,’ *Genesis*, 422-423. It is noteworthy that the verse itself does not have the term פילגש/pīlegeš. Unfortunately, it is beyond the scope of this study to do much more than speculate concerning the redaction process of Genesis. However, the similarities of Reuben's tale in Genesis to the accusations against Jerusalem in Ezekiel 23 are too strong to simply be chalked up to coincidence.

⁸⁷ John Briggs Curtis, "Some Suggestions concerning the History of the Tribe of Reuben," *JBR* 33, no. 3 (1965), 249. <http://www.jstor.org.fuller.idm.oclc.org/stable/1459586>.

⁸⁸ Curtis, "Tribe of Reuben," 249.

claiming to be descendants of Reuben. While this tribe may have once had a claim to rightful occupancy in the land, it was easily undermined with the simple insertion of פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* into the narrative.

Not from Terah Genesis 22:24 and 25:1-6

In the postexilic period, the governmentally sanctioned⁸⁹ way of determining one's legitimate claim to possession of the land was through genealogies. Though overtly noted throughout the whole HB that Abraham was the only legitimate ancestor for the Jewish community, a close reading of the genealogies of Genesis shows a preference for Terah over and above Abraham.⁹⁰ However, tracing one's ancestry to Terah was not enough, region of origin became a key component in authenticating elite or ruling class status.⁹¹ As Abraham was not the only child of Terah, the redactors would need to disqualify the heirs of Abraham's brother Nahor. The first synchronic appearance of פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* in Genesis is found in 22:24 and is associated with Nahor: "And his savage (and her name was Remuah), she also brought forth Tebach, and Gacham, and Tachash, and Maacah." The previous verses describe Nahor's wife as a direct

⁸⁹ In this instance governmental sanctioning was likely a lack of imperial oversight concerning the mid-enfranchised population's measures of othering. In order to create entitativity among the migrating Babylonian population, while ostracizing the indigenous people from inclusion in the new "traditional" community, the religious leaders and governors developed their own form of quantum test, that of traceable genealogies, cf. Daniel L. Smith, "The Politics of Ezra: Sociological Indicators of Postexilic Judaeon Society," pages 72-97 in *Second Temple Studies*, edited by Philip R Davies, and David J. A. Clines, JSOTSup 117 (Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1991); and Daniel Smith-Christopher, "The Mixed Marriage Crisis in Ezra 9-10 and Nehemiah 13: A Study of the Sociology of Post-Exilic Judaeon Community," pages 243-285 in *Second Temple Studies 2: Temple and Community in the Persian Period* JSOTSup 175, edited by Tamara C. Eskenazi and Kent H. Richards (Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1991). As this did not interfere with Persia's governance (tax collection and land usage), the practice was permitted. As Berquist notes, Darius "provided an administrative structure through which each region could codify its own traditions," *Persia's Shadow*, 54.

⁹⁰ See Excursus: Exegesis on Non-DtrH פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* texts and Chart 1.

⁹¹ Schneider, *Mothers of Promise*, 127.

descendant of Terah.⁹² Joel S. Baden notes the primary purpose of this otherwise "uninteresting" genealogy was specifically intended to show Rebekah and Isaac's familial relationship. More specifically the purpose of vv. 20-23 highlights Rebekah and Isaac's relationship to Terah and each other (reiterating the Eastern primacy of the "founding family"), while v. 24 exists to remove any other tribal claim to the land.⁹³ Here the author/redactor/editor of Genesis takes specific care to exclude five regional tribes from the land by labeling them "savages." By labeling Reumah a savage, five of Nahor's children (and the tribes that sprung from them) were excluded (Gen 22:24).

While the translation of "savage" is arguably appropriate for Bilhah (in order to undermine the reckless Reuben) and Nahor's family (as these children are not offered any redemption), barbarian⁹⁴ is possibly the better option for some of Abraham's children in Genesis 25:6. Abraham, also noted as "of Terah" and therefore from the east, has been promised the land of Canaan (Gen 13:14 and 15), but this land is intended for his offspring from Sarah and no other.⁹⁵ The second group of פִּילגְשִׁים/*pīlagšîm* encountered in Genesis are those belonging to

⁹² Nahor took his niece Milcah, Haran's daughter, as a wife (Gen 11:27-29). Milcah was born in Ur (Gen 11:29). Rebekah and Isaac almost exclusively are traced to Terah and the Chaldees (כְּשָׁדִים).

⁹³ Nahum Sarna connects Remuah and her children to tribes of the WMS, *JPS Torah Commentary: Genesis*, 1st ed., (Philadelphia: JPS, 1989), 156.

⁹⁴ There is a nuanced difference between savage and barbarian. Savage implies wild or animalistic, where barbarian is less dehumanizing. Barbarian implies a type of second class of person: not "civilized," but still partially human.

⁹⁵ Schneider, noted the repeated preference the deity shows to Sarah despite Abraham's constant distancing of her, Schneider, *Mothers of Promise*, 21-22, 40.

him.⁹⁶ After Sarah died and Rebekah became a wife for Isaac⁹⁷ "Abraham again took a women"⁹⁸ (v 25:1). The subsequent verses name her children, and some of her grandchildren, including Midian and Asshurim (vv 2-4). In verse 5 Abraham gave everything to Isaac; however, unlike in the case of Nahor's savage descendants, Abraham's פִּילגְשִׁים/*pīlagšîm* descendants were not all removed from the promise,. This may signal an alternate understanding of the term: "Abraham gave gifts while he was still alive, to the sons of the barbarians, who belonged to Abraham, and sent them away from Isaac, to the east - to the land of *his* ancestry" (v 6).⁹⁹ Two things should be noted here: 1) פִּילגְשִׁים/*pīlagšîm* is being applied to the *children* of Keturah, not her,¹⁰⁰ and 2) Midian and Assyria become legitimized as heirs of Abraham.

It is easy to gloss over the fact that בְּנֵי הַפִּילגְשִׁים/*bēnī happīlagshîm* refers to the descendants and not the child bearers.¹⁰¹ Abraham had children with multiple women. However,

⁹⁶ cf. Meir Zlotowitz and Nosson Scherman, *Bereishis: Genesis: A New Translation with a Commentary Anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic, and Rabbinic Sources*, 2nd ed. Artscroll Tanach Series, (Brooklyn, NY: Mesorah Publications, 1988), 970-971.

The Chronicler named Keturah a פִּילגְשִׁים/*pīlegeš*, despite the lack of that identification in Gen 25:1-6.

⁹⁷ The Hebrew here makes clear that Rebekah is Isaac's wife: "And he took Rebekah and she became for him for a wife," (Gen 24:67).

⁹⁸ Per the discussion under "Defining Terms" in the introduction אִשָּׁה/*iššā* here is translated "woman." More precisely: Contrary to the verbiage describing Rebekah and Isaac, there are no possessives used to describe the relationship between Abraham and Keturah only the verb לָקַח */lāqah-* "Again Abraham took a woman, and her name was Keturah" (Gen 25:1). This is pointedly different from the verbiage used to describe Abram, Sarai, and Hagar's relationships "And Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar the Egyptian, her slave-girl ... and gave to Abram, her husband, for him for a wife." (v 16:3). A survey of literature and translations offer a universal acceptance of the translation "wife" here for אִשָּׁה/*iššā*. Of the 152 times אִשָּׁה/*iššā* occurs in Genesis it exists 18 times without any prefixes or suffixes, of these 18 occurrences it is translated as wife five times without any markers of possession (here, once concerning Esau, and thrice concerning Jacob). Only in the case of Esau are the women referenced as אִשָּׁה/*iššā* (lacking possession and peculiarly singular; 26:34) later described as נָשִׁי/*nāšāy* (28:9).

⁹⁹ East can also mean ancient; in this case the redundancy is to highlight the geographic and ancestral origins of Abraham.

¹⁰⁰ Zlotowitz and Scherman, *Bereishis*, 970-971.

¹⁰¹ Points of interest: 1) it is not uncommon to refer to a people group as "sons of..." i.e. Ezekiel refers to the Assyrians as "sons of Assyria" in Ezekiel 23; and 2) a definite article is often used with gentilics and demonyms.

none of the women Abraham had children with were designated as פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* in Genesis.¹⁰²

Like the previous פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* verse, this one is intended not to define the woman's societal role particularly; rather, its purpose is to determine the place of the people who came from that woman from the standpoint of the postexilic ruling class.

As in the case of legitimizing Rebekah by having her come from the east, among the savages in chapter 25 Midian is introduced (legitimizing the marriage of Moses) as is Asshurim (intended to be understood as the father of Assyria¹⁰³); these descendants do not stay in Canaan, rather they were sent *back* to the east - the land from which Abraham came.¹⁰⁴ The reader is here informed that Isaac is special, but that the local children are redeemed by their connection with Abraham and his decision to send them to his place of origin. As Gerhard von Rad notes, the redactors of Genesis were not writing a biography, rather they preserved the Abrahamic tradition¹⁰⁵ of which the Midianites and Assyrians were apparently included through Keturah. In this pericope the redactor again points to the supremacy of Isaac as the ideal ancestor of the deity's chosen people, but marriage potential is extended to the barbarians, having half appropriate parentage, particularly after reintegration into the east.

¹⁰² Despite all the children in 25:1-4 being named as Keturah's, the fact that the following pericope is concerned with Ishmael may have resulted in the lumping of Hagar with Keturah by the Chronicler at the end of the Persian period. This assumption would remove the problem of פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* being pluralized here, even though the term is never applied to Hagar directly. Noting this as an assumption is important, as even the Midrashic tradition conflates Hagar with Keturah, rather than treating them as two people, additionally, there is record of others also recognizing that בְּנֵי הַפִּילֶגֶשׁ/*bēnī happîlagshîm* is referencing the children and not Keturah. cf. Zlotowitz and Scherman, *Bereishis*, 970-971.

¹⁰³ There is conflicting evidence concerning the Assurim. This is the only occurrence of this word in the HB and scholars have offered several suggestions concerning what tribe this refers to including Assyria and Arabia *HALOT* (cf. Von Rad rejects Assyria as an option due to the locational description in v 18).

¹⁰⁴ Here translated "east" קֵדָם is multivalent bringing to mind "before" or "ancient."

¹⁰⁵ Gerhard Von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, John H Marks trans., rev. ed., The Old Testament Library. (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972), 261.

In the cases of Bilhah as well as Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah¹⁰⁶ the descendants are deemed acceptable mates for the nation of Israel. In the case of the latter, one might even go so far as to translate פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* as "local/peasant" rather than barbarian: "Abraham gave gifts while he was still alive, to the local children, who belonged to Abraham, and sent them away from Isaac, to the east - to the land of *his* ancestry" (v 6).¹⁰⁷

Timna (Genesis 36:12)

The final פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* entry of Genesis to be addressed exists to clarify that not all פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* are equal: "Now Timna was a savage for Eliphaz, son of Esau, and she bore Amalek for Eliphaz" (Gen 36:12a). These were the children of Adah, Esau's wife. Though Abraham fathered barbarians who could eventually be brought back into the promise (i.e. Midian and Asshurim), there were those whose patrilineage would distinctly exclude them. In chapter 36 a seemingly bizarre genealogy of Edom unfolds. Esau (who is in the chosen Terah line) so called father of the Edomites, allowed other tribes to continue to exist in the land (36:20-39). Therefore, while one might have come from the land of Edom, that did not necessarily mean ze/they could be traced to Abraham.

Unlike Rebekah, Leah, and Rachel, Timna is neither from the east or of the line of Terah.

Timna and (much later) Rizpah are descendants of Seir the Horite of pre-Esau Edom (36:22).

¹⁰⁶ These are the sons of Keturah, one of the mothers of Abraham's children. It is the sons of Keturah who are called פִּילְגֶשִׁים/*pīlagšim*, not Keturah and Hagar.

While the choice to translate the term פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* as barbarian is well supported. One could argue that it is as appropriate to read לְאֶבְרָהָם אֲשֶׁר לְפִילְגֶשִׁים "and for the sons of the Pilagsheans, who were of Abraham," as the phrase "sons of" can denote membership to a people group (e.g. Gen 46:10; Exo 6:15; Lev 24:10; Num 4:27; Josh 15:14; Jud 1:22; 2 Sam 23:34) or class of people (e.g. 1 Kgs 20:35; 2 Kgs 2; 2 Kgs 25:23; Ezr 2:61; 6:4; Neh 3:8) cf. HALOT "בן 1."

¹⁰⁷ The significance is found in tracing the genealogies here. Both Midian and Assyria are legitimized as being descendants of Abraham in conjunction with their relocation in the east.

פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*, in Genesis, is undergoing evolution. Here is chapter 36, in the genealogy of Esau, one can see the beginning of its first adaptation. Where Esau's wives are clearly labeled as from Canaanite tribes, the first Edomite woman to sire children in Esau's genealogy is not called an Edomite, rather she is פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*. Timna is not a wife; she is the daughter of Seir, sister of Lotan (vv 20 & 22); Timna is a barbarian, chief,¹⁰⁸ and mother of Amalek.

This is precisely the case of both Timna and much later Rizpah, who both are traced back to Seir.¹⁰⁹ Timna was the daughter of Seir and she bore the great-great grandson of Abraham, Amalek. Additionally, Rizpah, a descendant of Timna's brother Zibea, father of Aiah.¹¹⁰ Timna's offspring, Amalek - father of the Amalekites,¹¹¹ becomes off limits to the "true heirs" of the promise, making Rizpah an inappropriate choice and rightly she has no surviving heirs.

¹⁰⁸ Within this genealogy are several lists of chiefs both Timna and Amalek are listed among them as is the Zibea, father of Aiah (ancestor of Rizpah).

¹⁰⁹ Seir along with Edom are recognized YHWHistic tribes in the Southern Levant. Martin Leuenberger, "YHWH's Provenance from the South A New Evaluation of the Arguments pro and contra," *The Origins of Yahwism*, Jürgen Van Oorschot and Markus Witte, eds., BZAW, V 484, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), doi:10.1515/9783110448221, 170-171.

Make no mistake, I am not advocating here for a contemporary understanding of historical record or genealogy. Rather, I am suggesting that these genealogies were (at times dissonant) traditions incorporated into the biblical account for the purpose of preserving multiple traditions and edited/redacted in an intricate sort of conversation. As Von Rad writes, "the redactor's interest is not directed primarily to the biographical circumstances of Abraham's life, but to the 'Abrahamic tradition,' which had to be collected and organized more or less organically as completely as possible and at the price of much absence of continuity," *Genesis*, 261. Did those of the tribe of Edom have their own YHWHistic genealogy through Seir and Esau? Would Saul have believed Rizpah to be a legitimate wife due to her lineage from a YHWHistic tribe associated with Edom? In the redactions leading up to the canonization of the Torah, is it possible that the "proper" lineage was still a topic of discussion. Once the correct deity had been determined as YHWH, the ruling familial lines were battled over in the text

¹¹⁰ There is no stated reason in the text of Judges that excludes Aiah from being the tribal name from which Rizpah descends. As is the case for 'son,' 'daughter' can be used for tribal or locational affiliation cf. Gen 27:46; Ju 21:21; Lam 3:51; and Is 16:2. That Rizpah is named, that she has a lineage (בַּת־אִיָּה/*bat-'ayyā*), that this named person (Aiah) is a member of a YHWHistic tribe in the Southern Levant (Seir), and that this person is related to a named פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* in Genesis (Timna) is beyond coincidence.

¹¹¹ Implied, much in the same way that Assurim is the father of Assyria above. The purpose is not historical accuracy, but literary devices used to connect those people to situations described later in the histories of Israel.

In this genealogy not only are the Amalekites discredited as savages, Aiah the ancestor of Rizpah (identified Pilagshean and co-parent with Saul) is identified with Edom with the result that her offspring could be considered legitimate inhabitants of the promised land, but not rulers. Here in chapter 36 is a major shift in the meaning of פִּלְגֶשֶׁשׁ/*pîlegeš*. In the same way that Canaanite is a derogatory demonym for a group of Western and Southern Levantine tribes, the labeling of Timna as פִּלְגֶשֶׁשׁ/*pîlegeš*, meaning “savage” or “barbarian” moves the discourse from simple derogatory othering to a nuanced regionally and deity based demonym.¹¹² And while its use here is still ambiguous, a more codified meaning in Judges - Kings for פִּלְגֶשֶׁשׁ/*pîlegeš* finds its first support in the ancestral connection of Rizpah to Timna (vv.20, 22, 24; cf. 2 Sam 3:7).

The author(s)/redactor(s)/editor(s) of Genesis did not always use the פִּלְגֶשֶׁשׁ/*pîlegeš* in the same exact way as Ezekiel. The term was adapted so that it would cause the audience to recall Ezekiel’s use, while at times offering a more nuanced use. Ezekiel used the term as a dehumanic, its use in Genesis is mostly only denigrating. That is to say, while Ezekiel used the term to grotesquely describe a people as only partially human, Genesis' redactors use the term to undermine a peoples' legitimacy as rulers and priests in the region, its use offers a secondary tier of legitimacy, while a פִּלְגֶשֶׁשׁ/*pîlegeš* would not be permitted to rule, ze/they could inhabit the promised land. Though a specific line is preferred, those outside of said line (the line of Terah¹¹³) could be potential marriage partners; and though their offspring would then be potentially accepted into the promise, those who took them as sexual partners could not themselves be political or spiritual rulers in the Southern Levant.

¹¹² “... it is the nearly unanimous verdict of historians of Israelite religion that Yahweh has southeast Semitic origins, whether his first worshipers were Kenites, Midianites, or Edomites,” *CANE*, 2047.

¹¹³ cf. Naomi A. Steinberg, "Alliance or Descent? The Function of Marriage in Genesis," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 16, no. 51 (1991): 45-55. doi:10.1177/030908929101605105.

Song of Songs and Esther

Esther and Song of Songs represent the finalized/fully formed/codified use of פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* as a demonym. In both cases the assumption has been that the פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* are a group of women who in some way interact with royalty. However, this is not necessarily the case. In Esther פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* is clearly a demonym. In both Esther and Song of Songs the term refers to groups of mix-gendered people. This is more clear in Song of Songs 6:8-9 where it is a comparative parallel to queens. As in previous cases, to understand פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* as a role distinct to women, particularly sexual in nature, is not the only, best or likeliest possibility, once assumptions are stripped away.

The People of Yehud (Esther 2:14)

Throughout the HB, there tend to be two distinguishing markers of gentilics/demonyms. The adjectival sufformative י/y and the definite article. As noted above, there are multiple examples of gentilics without the adjectival gentilic suffix. On the other hand, the definite article is only rarely omitted with biblical Hebrew gentilics and demonyms. הַפִּילָגֶשִׁים/*happîlagšîm* occurs twice in the HB, the first time in reference to Abrahams children (Gen 25:6, discussed above) and Esther 2:14. The term in the Book of Esther, no longer existed as a dehumanic; rather, it was used as a demonym to describe the people with whom Esther was affiliated based on geographical origins.¹¹⁴ The assumption that בֵּית הַנָּשִׁים שְׁנִי/*bēt hannašîm šenî* is paralleled to

¹¹⁴ This new meaning of פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* developed in the DtrH. In the DtrH it referred to people from the South and West Levant, who were not specifically "foreign," but could not trace their ancestry to Judah, Benjamin, Levi, or Joseph. Its usage here in Esther appears to broaden the definition to mean any people from the South or West Levant, employed or kept by the Achaemenid Empire.

הַפִּלְגָּשִׁים/*happîlagšîm* is betrayed in the translation "she returned into the second house of the women, to the custody of Shaashgaz, the king's chamberlain, who kept the concubines" (Esther 2:14, ASV). Alternately, to translate the text, "she returned to the house of second-wives,¹¹⁵ to the hand of Shaashgaz, the high official/eunuch who watched the Pilagsheans," shows the segmentation of women as well as people groups. It appears plausible that "the house of second-wives" is a specific class of wives kept by the empire, segregated by origin of populations.

The Peasants of Judah (Song of Songs 6:4-9)

Chapter 6:4-9 is demarcated in the MT within Song of Songs as a distinct passage. The speaker is male, the subject of admiration is female. The comparisons made as well as the features noted by the speaker do not necessarily carry a romantic value. Rather, they stand out as markers of culture and class. The speaker opens by comparing the woman to significant cities in the region, Tirzah and Jerusalem (v 4, both cities in which kings resided) and is followed by a peculiar comparison describing her "as terrifying as banners/flags" (v 4, used to signify crowd divisions). Both the cities and the notation of crowd division betray the urban and political leanings of the speaker.

The speaker then moves to the health and therefore viability of the woman. The reference to her hair (v 5) is not merely a note of her beauty, but on her social standing.¹¹⁶ In vs 5, the

¹¹⁵ The translation here is problematic as an adjective is expected to match the noun it modifies in gender, number, and definiteness. The presumption is therefore, that second modifies house; however, house is in construct with the wives, which makes it definite.

¹¹⁶ Susan Niditch notes the significance of grooming habits as markers of culture, identity, and economic class, *My Brother Esau Is a Hairy Man: Hair and Identity in Ancient Israel*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 25; cf. Gay Robins, "Hair and the Construction of Identity in Ancient Egypt, c. 1480-1350 B.C.," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 36 (1999): 1, <https://search-ebscohost-com.fuller.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lsdar&AN=ATLAI GEV161115002235&site=ehost-live>.

speaker notes not only the shade of the woman's teeth (like sheep), but that each one has a twin (she has not lost even one tooth). While dental concerns are cosmetic, they are also a sign of health, access to resources, and position in society.¹¹⁷ The woman being described is well bred. Finally, the woman is fertile. There are several potential explanations for the pomegranate reference in v 7, in every case it is a reference to her viability as a high-ranking wife. The classic romantic interpretation of the poem appropriately allows for the suggestive translation "thine open mouth is like the fissure of a pomegranate."¹¹⁸ The pomegranate was also a luxury item in the Eastern Mediterranean at least as far back as the bronze age, therefore its reference here in Song of Songs is potentially an inference of societal position.¹¹⁹ Yet, the pomegranate is also tied to life and death, particularly around issues of fertility.¹²⁰

The term of interest for this study appears in verses 8-9 among a list of people:

6 ⁸There (*male and female*)ⁱ are sixty queens and eighty barbarians, as well as enumerable young women. ⁹My dove, my civilized one,ⁱⁱ she is singular; she is unique to her mother; she is the bright oneⁱⁱⁱ of the woman^{iv} who bore her. The daughters saw her and considered her fortunate, the queens and the barbarians (*male and female*)^v admire her.

¹¹⁷ More than one Ancient Near Eastern text makes reference to teeth as indicators of health. To dream of teeth falling out is a deadly omen(8/12), Robert K. Ritner trans, "Dream Oracles (1.33) (P. Chester Beatty III, P. BM. 10683), 52;" in Hittite law there are penalties for knocking out a person's tooth and those penalties depend on the station of the person who lost the tooth - the free person's teeth are worth double that of a slaves (§7-8VII), Harry A. Hoffner, Jr. trans, "Hittite Laws (2.19)," 106; similar laws are recorded in the Laws of Hammurabi (§200-201), Martha Roth, The Laws of Hammurabi (2.131), 348; *The Context of Scripture*, William W Hallo, K. Lawson Younger, and David E Orton eds., (Leiden: Brill, 2003), Accordance electronic version.

¹¹⁸ Marc Rozelaar, "An Unrecognized Part of the Human Anatomy," *Judaism* 37, no. 1 (Wint 1988): 100. <https://search-ebscohost-com.fuller.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lsdar&AN=ATLA0000798386&site=ehost-live>.

¹¹⁹ Cheryl Ward, "Pomegranates in Eastern Mediterranean Contexts during the Late Bronze Age," *World Archaeology* 34, no. 3 (2003): 538. <http://www.jstor.org.fuller.idm.oclc.org/stable/3560202>. The use of pomegranates by the biblical authors supports this theory; throughout the Hebrew Bible the pomegranate appears as a litmus for plenty (Num 20:5; Deut 8:8; Joel 1:12), and a symbol of opulence (1 Kgs 7:20; Jer 52:22).

¹²⁰ Ward, "Pomegranates," 530; cf. Ann Suter, *The Narcissus and the Pomegranate: An Archaeology of the Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 58.

- i. The English language is lacking in its ability to express that this verb is masculine plural, the pronoun insinuates that at least one male is included in the group. Though not fully explained nor acknowledged in translation, the use of the masculine plural pronoun here is noted by as a rarity, cf. Roland E. Murphy, *The Song of Songs: A Commentary on the Book of Canticles or the Song of Songs*, S. Dean McBride, ed., Hermeneia--A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 175; Paul Joüon, and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, Subsidia Biblica, 27, (Roma: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2006), 516. An alternate word order is offered by Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor: "Sixty queens there may be...but my dove is unique," yet the issue of the pronoun gender is left unaddressed, Waltke, Bruce K, and Michael Patrick O'Connor. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 299.
- ii. תָּמַם/*tām* Common English translations are "perfect" (NKJV, NIV, NLT, ESV, NASB, NET, RSV to name a few) and "undefiled" (WEB, DBY, ASV, and KJV). Paralleled with יָשָׁר/*yāšar* often translated "upright," it can also be translated "proper" making the plausible parallel "civilized and proper." Both terms have Phoenician cognates, neither have Akkadian cognates and are often used in wisdom literature. To translate as "perfect" dismisses the Esau and Jacob metaphor of civilized vs barbarian, as this is the term used to describe Jacob in contrast to Esau who was called "a man of the field" and who took a פִּלְגֶשֶׁת/*pīlegeš*. Additionally, Jotham, son of Gideon/Jerubaal, is a theophoric name built on תָּמַם/*tām* assumed to mean YHWH's perfect. In a discussion of civilized vs uncivilized where Abimelech is the bramble son of a barbarian and Jerubaal, Jotham is "the civilized of YHWH" son of Gideon (the YHWHist).
- iii. Following the ASV translation of the same word in 6:10, which uses this adjective to describe the sun. Other possible translations are 'pure,' 'clean,' or even 'white,' all of which become 'bright' in the sun.
- iv. The verb here is feminine. As English has no gendered "one" (which is an appropriate, but ambiguous, translation), I have taken liberty by using woman without italicizing as woman is implicit in לֵיזְלֹתָ/*lēyōlādā*.
- v. The English language is lacking in its ability to express that this verb is masculine plural, the parsing of the verb insinuates that at least one male is included in the group. If פִּלְגֶשֶׁת/*pīlagšim* was indeed an abnormal feminine, then this verb would be feminine plural. This in addition to the masculine plural pronoun in v 8 marks an intentionality that this group is not entirely female.

The woman admired here was held to a standard against people. She was compared to those at the top of the social hierarchy, and those at the bottom (neither necessarily competitors). The use of פִּלְגֶשֶׁת/*pīlegeš* in Song of Songs 6:8-9 was not a descriptive term for a class of women in a royal "harem"¹²¹ of Judah. The greatest arguments against this are 1) the wives of the kings of Judah are never called queens, 2) the verbs and adjectives used with פִּלְגֶשֶׁת/*pīlegeš* are masculine plural. The writer is not comparing his lover to the women in his "harem." His use of queens and Pilagshean is to highlight that *all* people admire this singular woman, those with the

¹²¹ Though used in Chronicles to describe groups of women used for sex, the use of the term to describe social roles and in the HB is inappropriate once the history of harems and concubinage is fully realized.

most power, those with the least.

Chronicles

The use of פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* by the Chronicler is a major shift from its use anywhere else in the HB. Its use here betrays what can only be described as anachronistic exoticism. There is no archeological evidence, nor is there primary source evidence that "harems" or "concubinage" existed in the Ancient Near East.¹²² While there is recognition of multi-tiered spousal systems,¹²³ as well as evidence that groups of women did hold positions with duties in Assyria, Babylon, and Persia.¹²⁴ It is inappropriate to assume that these female workers or secondary wives existed in harems as concubines. The Chronicler shows Greco-influence in this biased and simplified use of פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*. Also of particular significance is that each of these texts, while reporting on histories documented in other biblical texts, offers slight variations going so far as to identify some as פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* who had previously not been so designated.

Below is a discussion of every passage in Chronicles that contains פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*. Four of the five occurrences are found in the genealogies of 1 Chronicles without any narrative that could be used to identify nuance in the usage of the term. The final passage comes from 2 Chronicles and contains some narratorial commentary. I will not translate these passages, as I do not contest the accepted translation of פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* as “concubine.” However, I will read each of the following passages in comparison to their intra-biblical parallels. I propose that the reason for

¹²² Discussed above, Chapter 3, “Universal Meaning of פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*,” Shahbazi, “Harem: I. In Ancient Iran,” *Elr* 11, no. 6, 671-672 and 12, no. 1, 1, 1-3; Herodotus, *The History of Herodotus*, i, 135.

¹²³ Discussed above, Chapter 2, “Marriage Institutions and Laws of Inheritance in the Hebrew Bible.”

¹²⁴ Discussed above, Chapter 2, “Marriage Institutions and Laws of Inheritance in the Hebrew Bible: *לְהֵנָּה/*Lēhēnā*.”

the change in usage of פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* is in part due to the shift in focus of the author(s)/redactor(s) of the Chronicler.

The Chronicler, unconcerned with the issue of monarchic legitimacy, would not have read the use of פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* as a delegitimizing tool for potentially ruling tribes, as there would have been no question who ruled the region by the time of its completion. As Gerstenberger notes, “the central issue of the entire Chronistic tradition is the concern for community membership, community structure, and especially the Levitical priestly ordering around and in the Jerusalem sanctuary.”¹²⁵

First Chronicles 1:32 marks the first occurrence of פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* in Chronicles. In it Keturah is named the פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*, “concubine” of Abraham, their sons are listed and well as their grandchildren specifically from Jokshan. Compared to the Genesis account, here Keturah is specifically and singularly labeled as the פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* meaning “concubine.” Whereas, in Genesis 25:6, פִּילְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* is plural with a definite article and can be read (as I read it) as the modifier for the children of Abraham and Keturah.¹²⁶ Unlike in the Genesis account, the genealogy of Keturah ends there leaving out their greatgrandchild Asshurim (cf. Gen 25:3). It should also be stated that Hagar does not appear in Chronicles.

Within the 1 Chronicles genealogies, there are two Calebs (1 Chron 2:18 and 1 Chron 2:46). The first is named the son of Hezron and is associated with Ephrath who bore Hur (v 18); the second is identified as the brother of Jerameel (v 42), is associated with Ephah (a concubine) who bore Haran (v 46), and is the father of Achsah (v 49) born of the concubine Maacah (v 48). I

¹²⁵ Erhard S. Gerstenberger, *Israel in the Persian Period: The Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C.E.*, Biblical Encyclopedia: An English Translation of Biblische Enzyklopädie, 8, Siegfried S. Schatzmann trans. (Atlanta, GA: SBL, 2011), 145.

¹²⁶ Zlotowitz and Scherman, *Bereishis*: 970-971.

point out the two Calebs and their masculine relatives as neither have precise intra-biblical parallels, and though listed separately appear as though they could be one in the same. Caleb son of Jephunneh is recorded in Numbers (13:6, 30; 14:6, 30; 26:65; 32:12; 34:19), Deuteronomy (1:36), Joshua (14:6, 13, 14; 15:13; 21:12); his brother is listed as Othniel (Josh 15:17; Judg 1:13, 3:9). None of these accounts list women that he is attached to outside of his daughter, Achsah, who he gives to his brother Othniel as a reward for smiting Kiriath-sepher (Josh 15:16-17 and Judg 1:12-13). Achsah, who has no listed mother in the Joshua and Judges accounts, is named Macaah's daughter here in Chronicles. As the narrator gives no reckoning for why these people appear in the genealogies or explanation of actions taken by them, I can merely attempt to point out the record as compared to itself. Despite all the names given regarding the concubines and the children of the concubines, save Achsah and Macaah (though probably not the same Macaah), none of them are mentioned anywhere else in the HB outside of the genealogies in Chronicles.

This only time David's פִּילגְשִׁים/*pîlagšîm* are listed as having children appears in 1 Chronicles 3:9. However, this is unlikely to refer to the פִּילגְשִׁים/*pîlagšîm* of Jerusalem discussed in 2 Sam 5:13-16; 15:16; 16:21-22; and 19:6, as those discussed in the text are specifically noted as not having children. This may refer to the women David did not marry, but who bore him children (2 Sam 3:2-5). Here, in Chronicles, the sons of the concubines were not listed, as compared to the names of the sons listed in 2 Sam 3:2-5, who do not appear elsewhere in the HB (save Solomon).¹²⁷

¹²⁷ This is discussed below in Chapter 5, "The Pilagshian of Jerusalem."

Outside of Chronicles, Manasseh is recorded as having Machir (Gen 50:23) and Gamaliel (Num 1:10); the mother(s) of these children is not mentioned. Whereas Asriel is noted as having come from Shechem (Num 26:31), and as a “son of Manasseh” (Josh 14:2), these would have been descendants, not direct sons.¹²⁸ Furthermore, the mother of Manasseh’s child(ren) is not recorded elsewhere. The genealogies in 1 Chronicles end in chapter 9, and there are no other פִּילְגֶשִׁים/*pîlagšîm* noted in these genealogies or the remainder of 1 Chronicles. The final appearance of פִּילְגֶשִׁים/*pîlegeš* is found in 2 Chronicles 11:21.

In this verse we are told of Rehoboam, son of Solomon (1 Kgs 11:1; 1 Chron 3:10; 9:31). In the parallel texts, there is no mention of Rehoboam having multiple wives. Here in 2 Chronicles Macaah is named as his favorite wife, and mother of Abijah, who he loved more than his wives and concubines (v 21). The concubines are not named nor are their children distinguished from the other unnamed children of the unnamed wives (v 21).

The political world of Yehud changed between the redaction of Genesis and the composition of Chronicles. There may have been hope for a reinstatement of a monarch by some of the migrant Babylonian Jewish population during the early stages of the reconstruction of Jerusalem. This would have led to a conversation among the migrating population and the indigenous population concerning who had the right to rule the region. The use of פִּילְגֶשִׁים/*pîlegeš* in the Genesis text as a delegitimizing tool would have been a handy resource for those looking to take control of the region. As Achaemenid rule of the region continued, this put those arguments to rest and the term was appropriated to refer to the un-genealogized people of the region or the peasants. For those closer to the Persian Empire in status – such as scribes and

¹²⁸ HALOT recommends deleting it altogether from 1 Chronicles 7:14.

priests – this generally became the term used for those from the region (and possibly included the idea of being faithful to YHWH). By the time Chronicles was being composed, the term might have been out of vernacular use and only appeared in the narrative texts. The Chronicle, not concerned with issues of monarchic rights, could have read the histories that included פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* without knowing the origins or context. Looking to contemporary resources and doing zir/their best to understand the word within context to best apply it in zir/their work. As the term appears concerning women in the genealogies of the patriarchs and early monarchs of Israel and Judah (1 Chr 1:32; 2:46 and 48; 3:9; 7:14; 2 Chr 11:21) and in light of the work of Herodotus in which the Greek term παλλακην/*pallakēn* is used to describe the houses of women in Persia, ze/they would have used it as “concubine.” This final and simple use of the term would have a lasting impact on how the word came to be translated in the millennia following.

CHAPTER 4

HISTORICAL CONTEXT/SITUATION IN LIFE

INTRODUCTION

Understood by many as a history of the foundation of Israel as a nation after the exodus through the fall of Judah and into the Babylonian exile, the DtrH is that and more. This is a history with an intriguing background and a plethora of hidden agendas. This is a collection of stories that include the tales of the impacts of colonization, migration, repatriation, and indigenous populations. It is not simply a history that described, as Noth explains, one man's understanding of the creation and the fall of a nation.¹ Bound up in this collection are a variety of viewpoints concerning religion, governance, and people. Though apostasy appears as a theme throughout, cultic practices are not always clearly defined or absolute. Questions concerning the "rightful ruler" of Israel and eventually Israel and Judah are broached again and again, every ruler lifted up is fraught with problems. Dtr² preserved multiple perspectives with the outcome of having more than one synchronic arch running through the DtrH. The concerns of multiple parties are held within this collection and existence in dissonance without resolution.

PERSIA'S ROLE IN THE COMPOSITION

The Neo-Babylonian Empire built large cities, through labor exploitation of captured rebellious subjects,³ as symbols of their power. Persian rulers saw no benefit in keeping the

¹ Noth, *The DtrH*, 99.

² This stands in for any person who had a hand in the formation of the text. Many have contributed to scholarship regarding the nature of the Dtr as person, school, and/or imperially supported propagandist. It is beyond the scope of the present project to make definitive statements concerning the identity of such persons or institutions.

³ A major contributor in the growth of the cities is the growth in agriculture. The Jerusalem captives were put to work in the temple, administration, and agriculture, Berquist, *Persia's Shadow*, 15 (cf. 2 Kgs 25:12, 27-30).

detainees of captured lands in cities and within the first few decades of conquering Babylon began to repatriate⁴ the peoples of conquered regions of the previous empire. This included the encouragement of the captured elite of Judah. In a move to better use the full resources of the Empire, the Babylonian Jewish community was encouraged to migrate to Yehud.⁵ Once there they were permitted to "self-govern" with Persian oversight, which included *reinstating* their own religious practices.⁶

Upon entering the region of Yehud the people found others in the land.⁷ It is during this period that the DtrH as we know it today found its written inception. A history of the people was endorsed by the empire and traditions were collected, arranged, adapted, and redacted with the purpose of allowing the colonized people to develop and maintain an identity that was both morale boosting and in line with imperial rule.⁸ The result was a multi-volume history preserving a variety of perspectives concerning cultic practices and governance. To maintain a benevolent

The agricultural forced labor contributed greatly to the Neo-Babylonian city development, This was not unique to cities in Ancient Israel, the same sort of stratification existed in Babylon as well, Michael Jursa, "Factor Markets in Babylonia from the Late Seventh to the Third Century BCE," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 57, no. 2 (2014): 173-202. <http://www.jstor.org/fuller.idm.oclc.org/stable/43303587>, 175.

⁴ Despite several biblical books using terms יָשָׁב/yšb to describe the people and actions of the migrants moving to Yehud from Babylon, this will not be the preferred term used here. Contemporary migration studies offer terms such as "repatriate" and "migrate," which are better descriptions of the actions of the historical people. Stéphane Dufoix, *Diasporas*, William Rodarmor trans. (University of California Press; Berkeley, 2008) and Kevin Kenny, *Diaspora: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press; New York, 2013).

⁵ Berquist, *Persia's Shadow*, 26-26.

⁶ These had not been fully codified and were still being debated. Cf. Gideon/Jerubbaal in chapter 5.

⁷ Berquist suggests that within Isa 56-66 a dispute between the indigenous population and the migrant community arose concerning cultic practices, specifically the building of a central temple, "Reading Difference in Isaiah 56-66: The Interplay of Literary and Sociological Strategies," *MTSR* 7, no. 1 (January 1995): 23-42.

Much latter in the postexilic period, the struggle between the migrants and the residents of the land is noted in the biblical texts of Ezra-Nehemiah, in which case the indigenous population are called foreigners (referring to them by antiquated and out of use demonyms). The result of the latter dispute is the forced migration of the women who were unable to prove their genealogical background along with their and children (Ezra 10).

⁸ Cf. Jon L. Berquist, *Judaism in Persia's Shadow: A Social and Historical Approach* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Pub, 2003), 137-138, and Gerstenberger, *Israel in the Persian Period*, 275-276.

relationship with Persia, one overarching theme stands out: though the people's chosen cult was sufficient, their inability to self-govern led to their destruction under Babylon and their salvation by Cyrus and Persia. While this theme is prominent, a hidden subversive transcript was also preserved in the DtrH that called into question the Levite led Jerusalem cult of YHWH as well as a monarchy-based polity.

In the reading of the PRDtrH that follows three groups must be considered: the colonizers/empire, the mid-enfranchised elite/repatriates, and the indigenous people.-The Persian emperors such as Cyrus, Cambyses, and Darius, often lauded for their "human rights" work, encouraged captured peoples to repatriate to their "homelands," and while this appears to be an altruistic gesture, even gaining Cyrus the title of Messiah (Isa 45:1), this was an economic decision.⁹ Additionally, those leaving Babylon were also making economic choices, at times shrouded in the language of religion. Meanwhile those left behind during the Neo-Babylonian capture/destruction of Judah had continued to live their lives as before.¹⁰ In the postexilic period this people went from being virtually autonomous (self-governed and following diverse cultic traditions at smaller local shrines) to being neither citizen nor foreigner, a people in limbo with little control over their own beings. Their families had long resided in this region, yet they lacked documentation to support their claim to residency and therefore were eventually excluded as citizens of Persian Yehud.¹¹

⁹ By encouraging slow steady population increases in the periphery, the Achaemenid Empire was able to strengthen its military through an extensive network of resources, thereby allowing the Empire to effectively maintain and expand its territories; bring in revenue through taxed resources produced in the provinces; and encourage a growing mercantile, Berquist, *Persia's Shadow*, 26.

¹⁰ Hans M. Barstad, *History and the Hebrew Bible: Studies in Ancient Israelite and Ancient Near Eastern Historiography*, FAT 61 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 132; Gerstenberger, *Israel in the Persian Period*, 5.

¹¹ Ezra 2 and Nehemiah 7 are concerned greatly with genealogies of the repatriating community, whereas, Ezra 9 and Nehemiah 11 are focused on applying names to those who were living in the land. These names

In Babylon, the enslaved exiles were given the option to continue in their former work in court positions,¹² those who would not assimilate into Babylonian culture were used for hard labor.¹³ Within the biblical texts, particularly the exilic and postexilic prophets, lies descriptions of the exiled people's plights as well as the development of a diasporic mindset in which the "homeland" became idealized and a "return" prophesied (Jer 29:10; 30; 32:44; 33; Isa 55:1; Zech 10). With the conquest of Babylon by Persia, an empire that encouraged repatriation, those who had been marginalized in Babylon were given the opportunity to gain a certain amount of autonomy, and potentially a higher standard of living by moving to the provinces.

In taking the opportunity to migrate to Yehud, this group of people hoped to move to a more powerful position, themselves becoming rulers and landowners. The people merely had to stay loyal to Persia. The newly empowered and immigrated Babylonian Jews, encouraged/supported by the empire, arranged a detailed history. Under the guise of reclaiming the past, this history included adapted tales of the formation of the Israelite/Judahite monarchy and a push to adopt centralized YHWHistic monotheism. Yet, within this arrangement a subversive voice survived, one that idealized tribal governance and organic religion while demonizing a centralized government and cult: the PRDtrH. The whole collection became known as the DtrH. This history did not present one definitive ideal polity; rather, a dialogue was preserved in the text between those who opposed foreign allegiances, a king, and a central cult

include demonyms that were no longer in use, such as Hittite and Amorite, in order to demonize the indigenous population (cf. Chapter 3). Contemporary examples of this are found globally: Kurds, Rohingya, Uyghur, Palestinians, First Nations peoples of the Americas, Tutsi, Australian Aborigines

¹² Scott refers to these slaves as socially detached making them ideal as "skilled but politically neutralized staff," *Against the Grain*, 167-168. Cf. Jon L. Berquist, "Reading Difference in Isaiah 56-66: The Interplay of Literary and Sociological Strategies," *MTSR* 7, no. 1 (January 1995), 34.

¹³ Scott, *Against the Grain*, 170.

and those who supported it.

THE HISTORY OF THE FORMATION OF THE PEOPLE AND THE NATION ISRAEL

The historicity of the synchronic biblical narrative of the formation of Israel was called into question during the latter half of the twenty-first century. In his 1962 article, "Hebrew Conquest of Palestine," George Mendenhall suggested that the peasant revolt and ousting of royal administrators (as witnessed in the Armarna texts) was adjusted and glossed over, and described by the biblical authors as the exodus and conquest.¹⁴ Rather than understanding the exodus and conquest as a linear event that one people group experienced in a relatively short period of time, it is more likely that the exodus and conquest of Palestine were adapted origin stories from multiple peoples that eventually became collected, organized in a linear form, and spun into a semi-cohesive history of the people.¹⁵ Deuteronomy, Joshua, and Judges are

¹⁴ George E. Mendenhall, "Hebrew Conquest of Palestine," *BA* 25, no. 3 (1962), 73. Mendenhall's work on the formation of Israel was later expanded by Norman K. Gottwald, who analyzed Mendenhall's work and added to it, *The Tribes of Yahweh: A Sociology of the Religion of Liberated Israel, 1250-1050 B.C.E.* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979).

Recently, William G. Dever has added to the scholarship questioning a biblicist reading concerning the origins of Israel. Through an extensive discussion of twentieth century biblical scholarship and archeology, Dever concludes that Israel's origins fall under an agrarian reform model, not rejecting the revolting peasant theory, but recognizing multiple factors for the political changes in Canaan from 1200 - 1000 BCE leading to the development of Israel as a nation, *Beyond the Texts: An Archaeological Portrait of Ancient Israel and Judah* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2017), 119-233.

Pitkänen lists and summarizes four popular models for the conquest and settlement described in Joshua – Judg: the conquest model, the peaceful infiltration model, the peasant's revolt model, and peaceful infiltration models. He holds to a maximalist reading with a modified conquest model that incorporates "peaceful immigration and assimilation," "Joshua," Kindle Edition.

Mario Liverani offers a minimalist perspective with the conquest being a largely invented tale that more accurately described the repatriation of the Babylonian Jewish community, *Israel's History and the History of Israel*, Bibleworld (London: Equinox, 2005), 270-291.

¹⁵ It is not within the scope of this work to address the historicity of the exodus and conquest as reported in the biblical text. Rather, it is significant to underscore that while histories, myths, and legends may have a kernel of authenticity it is unlikely to be an entirely accurate depiction (nor is it intended to be). Writers, artists, priests, and historians are in the business of making meaning, not fact, much like the stories of Christopher Columbus, the Pilgrims at Plymouth, or the tales of John Smith and Pocahontas. Despite these tales being told as origin stories for the United States as a whole, they are not explanations of how everyone person living in the USA today arrived, yet these legends have acted as keystones for many in the US throughout its history as a means of shared culture.

collections of myths, legends, tales, and invented histories from multiple tribes and peoples. The collections reflect a long history of those who acted as allies in order to secure autonomy that took decades to procure. These collections, rarely written during the times they claim to reflect, note multiple perspectives regarding worship and polity of the peoples of the land at the time of collection.

It is significant to underscore that in the history of the nation (as recorded in the HB), Israel was a tribal affiliation not a nationality until the coronation of Saul the "first" king of Israel.¹⁶ It is impossible to say, with certainty, when Israel became a monarchy and more than allied tribes. There is extra-biblical textual evidence of Israel as a people from the thirteenth-century BCE and the kingdoms of Israel and Judah as early as the mid-ninth-century BCE, but debate around many of these inscriptions is ongoing.¹⁷

This is significant in the exilic and postexilic periods as a history of the people of Yehud was developed and canonized. The possibility of the pre-monarchic tribes existing as a loosely affiliated group of "uncivilized peasants,"¹⁸ was glossed over as the traditions were adapted and arranged into the DtrH. As Neils Peter Lemche suggests:

Instead of a report on what really happened in Palestine in the Bronze through Iron Ages in antiquity, the history writers re-created the past as a tragic drama of

¹⁶ The designation "land of Israel" occurs (synchronically) for the first time in 1 Samuel 13:19 and appears only four times in all of the DtrH (cf. 2 Kgs 5:2;4; and 6:23). Throughout Deuteronomy and DtrH designations include: "children (sons) of Israel" (two hundred times), "daughters of Israel" (three times), "men of Israel" (forty-three times), "camp of Israel" (six times), "elders of Israel" (thirteen times), "all Israel" (ninety-five times), Joshua 11:21 seems to refer to the divided kingdoms, "your people Israel" (eleven times), "all of the congregation of Israel" (three times),

¹⁷ See: Merneptah Stele (1209 BCE) - "Israel" questionable; Mesha Stele (850 BCE) - Omri confirmed, "house of David" questionable; Kurkh Monoliths (850 BCE) - "Ahab of Israel" questionable; Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III (825 BCE) - Jehu confirmed; Tel Dan Stele (800 BCE) - "king of Israel" and "house of David" (presumed to mean Judah) confirmed.

¹⁸ Peasants who revolted against their rulers, becoming un-citizenized without a state with which they belonged. Scott, discusses groups who chose to leave the "protection" of states for more freedom and how walls were indeed built to prevent this from happening, *Against the Grain*, 233-234

Israel, as being under the curse, and at the same time respectively the blessing of God. Every part of the history is seen and should be understood from this perspective, and not as a reflection of the past *as it was*.¹⁹

This view may appear extreme, but it expresses a certain reality concerning histories, memories, and narratives: they reflect the time in which they are preserved (written or codified) as much as they reflect the time period they claim to be reporting on.²⁰ This is not to say that the origin accounts preserved in the DtrH should be dismissed as entirely fictitious.²¹ What is described in the text likely houses pieces of history from pre-exilic allied tribes as they sought power, land, and wealth. The preserved histories included the inter-tribal dialogue concerning authorized deities and cultic practices, as well as memories of power struggles between tribal leaders culminating in regional rulers.²² These "conflicting" tales would have been ripe for postexilic folklorists and redactors to appropriate into their contemporary discussions and the official history.

PRE-EXILIC JUDAH

The kingdom of Judah was a loosely-connected grouping of cities and villages in the southern Levant. Though much of our preserved biblical text is read through the lens that Judah

¹⁹ Niels Peter Lemche, *Ancient Israel: A New History of Israel*, second ed. (T & T Clark Cornerstones. London: T & T Clark, 2015), 130.

²⁰ This will be discussed in greater detail in the section below: "Power for the Powerless: Repatriation."

²¹ Work in linguistics, geology, and indigenous populations studies have led scientists to take ancient myths more seriously as semi-accurate accounts of ancient events, lending credence to the possibility that myths and legends have historical kernels on which the myths were developed and expanded, Patrick D. Nunn, *The Edge of Memory: Ancient Stories, Oral Tradition and the Post-Glacial World*, Bloomsbury Sigma Series, Book Thirty-Nine (London: Bloomsbury Sigma, 2018). See also, Gottwald, *Politics of Ancient Israel* (Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 246.

²² A great example of this is found in the Gideon/Jerubbaal and Abimelech tale, expanded below, more than one faction laid claim to a singular figure. Multiple traditions were woven together with the result of lifting up YHWHism over Ba'alism, while undermining potential northern temple sites.

was a tightly connected, strictly governed people who all practiced the same traditions and obeyed their king, the reality is that this is a curated history, written long after the actual events. Despite the stated desire to move all YHWHistic worship to a central location during Solomon's reign,²³ there is no evidence that the rural communities gave up their cultic practices. On the contrary, there is a considerable amount of evidence that households in the rural communities had home based cultic practices as well local shrines and altars regardless of what was state ordained.²⁴ This lifestyle is described in the former books of the DtrH, where more of the text was devoted to a broad spectrum of tribe members and not entirely focused on the elite. Those working in the fields and pastures would have prayed to and made altars to any divine name that worked; the multiple names of "God" in the HB bible, even the use of the plural אֱלֹהִים/*elōhîm*, are holdovers from this polytheism and henotheism.

The People of Judah Late 7th-century BCE through the Exile

Liverani highlights a good amount of archeological evidence to show that the Southern Kingdom thrived after the fall of the Northern Kingdom, farming production increased and expansion into arid regions occurred as "the Judean countryside reached its maximum population density."²⁵ Among the artifacts discovered in the region are royal seals that bear Egyptian

²³ If this temple even existed. The oldest reliable archaeological evidence of a temple of YHWH can be dated to the sixth-century BCE. There is more recently unearthed evidence of a Temple of YHWH from the ninth-century BCE, an inscription describing Jehoash's restoration of the temple. Scholarship is still split concerning the authenticity of the inscription. Even if it is found to be authentic, it does not note that the temple was built by Solomon. Knauf, Ernst Axel. "Jehoash's Improbable Inscription." *Biblische Notizen* 117 (2003): 22–26. <https://search-ebscohost-com.fuller.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lsdar&AN=ATLA0001382932&site=ehost-live>; Nir Hasson, "Court Rules State Can't Prove Jehoash Tablet Fake," *Haaretz*, (Aug 10, 2013), <https://www.haaretz.com/archaeology/.premium-jehoash-tablet-fake-court-state-can-t-prove-it-1.5318836>

²⁴ Cf. Carol Meyers' chapter "Women's Religious Culture," in *Households and Holiness: The Religious Culture of Israelite Women*, Facets (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2005).

²⁵ *Israel's History*, 154-155.

influence in the winged sun and four-winged scarab. This points to the permeability of life and cultic practices in the ancient Levant. Barstad builds on M. Smith's "common theology of the Ancient Near East," highlighting the large similarities between what is described in the biblical text as it compares to the extra biblical reports of cultic practices in the region. The list includes law, treaty and covenant, divine war, divinely appointed rulers, and a considerable number of similarities between the deities.²⁶ With so many similarities, the majority of the people did not have the time or desire to care about *proper* titles and practices so much as they needed *tried and true* practices; therefore, the maintenance of familial traditions in the fields and local shrines saw little change despite the changes in the cities²⁷ such as those projects and reforms that are attributed to Hezekiah.²⁸

In the HB smaller polities, like Judah, were of little consequence to the empires with objectives to amass land and resources.²⁹ It was not uncommon for these polities to be left untouched so long as they did not rise up against an empire, and as long as they paid taxes/tribute to the ruling empire. During the reign of Hezekiah, Cogan notes, "the kingdom of Judah seems to have enjoyed the benefits of association with an imperial power," he says, "despite the tax and tribute payments – which must have been onerous," but it was likely because of those payments that "Judah was spared the direct effects of the Assyrian onslaught of Israel."³⁰ It was most

²⁶ Barstad, *History*, 54-63.

²⁷ Knight, *Law, Power, and Justice*, 223-224.

²⁸ Liverani, *Israel's History*, 152 and 155-156; cf. 2 Kgs 18:4.

²⁹ While the actual amassing was important, more significant was the need to prove strength in order to maintain order in the empire both in the capital city and to stave off rebellions from the vassal kingdoms. This was often done through propagandistic monuments and writings. Cf. Antti Laato, "Assyrian Propaganda and the Falsification of History in the Royal Inscriptions of Sennacherib," *VT* 45, no. 2 (1995): 198–226. <https://search-ebscohost-com.fuller.idm.oclc.org/login.aspx?direct=true&db=lsdar&AN=ATLA0000898513&site=ehost-live>.

³⁰ Cogan, "Into Exile," *Oxford History*, 245.

beneficial to an empire in power to violently assert authority only when a deliberate uprising occurred, in these instances strong violent action and deportation were required.

In those cases it was only the infringing portion of the colonized population that was deported: the rulers, scribes, priests, army officers, skilled craftsmen and smiths, and diviners/prophets.³¹ In their new home these people were forced to assimilate being folded into similar positions within the courts, schools, and temples. In the case of Jerusalem's overthrow this is precisely what happened. The ruler of Judah, Zedekiah, broke from Assyria in 589, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem and deportation of Jerusalem's elite in 587-6.³²

During the Neo-Babylonian conquest of Judah in 597-587 BCE, the Judean elite were taken as captives to Babylon. This group included the priestly class, the educated scribal class, the wealthy landowners, and the rulers (royalty, military leaders, and judges). There is biblical and archeological evidence that a population remained in Judah during the Babylonian exile.³³ With the Jerusalem elite, educated, and powerful, removed a power void existed in the region. This power void was quickly and easily filled by those left behind. In the years following the exile, those left behind continued to self-govern and maintaining their own cultic practices including the use of local shrines. Though left behind with little oversight, the remnant were expected to continue production of goods for military forces and luxury export; as long as they did this they were left to themselves.³⁴

³¹ Berquist, *Persia's Shadow*, 14; Mordechai Cogan, "Into Exile: from Assyrian Conquest of Israel to the Fall of Babylon," in *The Oxford History of the Biblical World*, Michael D. Coogan ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 264.

³² Cogan, "Into Exile," 262-69.

³³ Berquist, *Persia's Shadow*, 14-15. Barstad devotes a chapter, "The Myth of the Empty Land," to a discussion of the evidence in *History*, 90-134.

³⁴ Berquist, *Persia's Shadow*, 14-15; Barstad, *History and the Hebrew Bible*, 134, 151, 154-155.

Village social structure in the region, though showing a reverence to adult males, was remarkably egalitarian. According to Avraham Faust's analysis of Iron Age II settlements in ancient Israel there was "a great deal of *cooperation* and *equality* and little to no social stratification."³⁵ This is unlike the urban centers in which division of labor and social stratification occurred.³⁶ Despite the belief by some that the rise of the monarchy had a considerable impact on village and rural life in ancient Israel, administration of villages was left in the hands of the elders.³⁷ When the elite of Judah were taken into Babylon, a large percentage of the population of the region remained behind. With little outside influence, the rural communities preserved tradition during both the monarchic and exilic periods.³⁸

These preserved traditions included religious practices performed by ordinary men and women, some of which are described in the pre-exilic and exilic period biblical texts. JoAnn Scurlock points to offerings made by women on rooftops (Zeph 1:5; Jer 19:3), as well as the production of Queen of Heaven cakes (kneaded by women and baked by men) in Jeremiah 44:15-19.³⁹

³⁵ Avraham Faust, "The Rural Community in Ancient Israel during Iron Age II," *BASOR* 317 (2000): 17-39. doi:10.2307/1357482, 32.

³⁶ Paula McNutt, *Reconstructing the Society of Ancient Israel*, LAI (Westminster John Knox Press; 1999), 151; cf. Faust, "The Rural Community," 33. This was not unique to cities in Ancient Israel, the same sort of stratification existed in Babylon as well, cf. Jursa, "Factor Markets in Babylonia."

³⁷ Faust, "The Rural Community," 30 and 32; Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions*, John McHugh trans. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1961), 138

³⁸ Faust, "The Rural Community," 30; S. Bendor, *The Social Structure of Ancient Israel: The Institution of the Family (beit'ab) from The Settlement to the End of the Monarchy* (Jerusalem: Simor, 1996), 167.

³⁹ JoAnn Scurlock, "Popular Religion or Popular Participation in Public Rites," *Private and State in the Ancient Near East: Proceedings of the 58th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale at Leiden, 16-20 July 2012*, edited by R. de Boer and Jan Gerrit Dercksen (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2017), 277-278.

With the Jerusalem elite deported, there was unlikely any real impact on the people outside Jerusalem.⁴⁰ Initially the Babylonian Jewish community and the people of the land recognized each other as legitimate members of the community and loyal YHWHists.⁴¹ This mutual acceptance waned as more of the Babylonian community entered the land.

Exile, Persia, and the Postexilic People

Reportedly, with permission and encouragement from Cyrus (Ezra 1:2-4), some of the Jewish community of Babylon began a move to the Persian province of Yehud and rebuild during the reign of Darius.⁴² The migrants considered themselves repatriates, carrying with them their traditions. With the full support of Persia, the Babylonian Jews took control of Jerusalem and began to “rebuild” their social, judicial, and religious organizations.⁴³ With the Persian-appointed governors and the priestly class, leading to conversations around who the "remnant" actually was and later to discussions of who would be considered people of the land.⁴⁴

POWER FOR THE POWERLESS: REPATRIATION

Not long after the successful capture of Babylon from the Assyrians Nebuchadnezzar, (crowned king of Babylon in 605 BCE upon the death of his father) did not begin his reign with

⁴⁰ Berquist, *Persia's Shadow*, 15.

⁴¹ J. A. Middlemas, "Beyond the Myth of the Empty Land: A Reassessment of the Early Persian Period," in *Exile and Restoration Revisited: Essays on the Babylonian and Persian Periods in Memory of Peter R. Ackroyd*, Ackroyd, Peter R, Gary N. Knoppers, Lester L. Grabbe, and Deirdre N. Fulton, eds., Library of Second Temple Studies, 73 (London: T & T Clark, 2009), 181.

⁴² Liverani, *Israel's History*, 252-253.

⁴³ Gottwald, *The Politics*, 141.

⁴⁴ Liverani, *Israel's History*, 256-257.

chill. Taking breaks from squelching rebellions in the region only to be coronated and for new year celebrations, he continued his campaigns in Syria, Palestine and Egypt into the late sixth-century BCE. Just one year after the first deportation of elite Judeans in 597, Nebuchadnezzar found himself putting down a rebellion within his capital city.

While there is no evidence of migration between Babylon and the Levant during the exilic period,⁴⁵ one of the first major building projects Nebuchadnezzar worked on was the building of two walls around the inner and outer city "to strengthen the defenses of Babylon."⁴⁶ As Scott notes, imperial walls were often described as built to keep invaders out, but were practically used to keep people in.⁴⁷

While Jeremiah encouraged the exiled community to get accustomed to their new home (29:5-7), diasporic voices were preserved in Ezekiel and Isaiah calling the people to remember their ancestral deity and land with a hope for restoration. However, by the end of the exilic period there was a recorded resistance among the exiled community to leave Babylon leading the postexilic prophets to strongly encourage the Babylonian Jewish community to repatriate.⁴⁸ There were many descendants of the exiled community who were willing to assimilate and to find stability and comfort.⁴⁹ Several generations into Babylon, there is record of YHWHistic

⁴⁵ Berquist, *Persia's Shadow*.

⁴⁶ Michael Roaf, *Cultural Atlas of Mesopotamia and the Ancient Near East* (New York: Facts on File, 1990), 199. An interior wall around the city and a larger wall north of the city between the two rivers.

⁴⁷ Scott, *Against the Grain*, 235.

⁴⁸ The exilic prophets did not speak to a people who wanted to leave Babylon, but rather they had to offer support for why the move would be preferential to remaining in Babylon.

⁴⁹ Michael L. Satlow, "The Second Commonwealth: Babylonia, Persia, and Yehud, 586–520 BCE," in *How the Bible Became Holy* (Yale University Press; New Haven, 2014) <http://www.jstor.org.fuller.idm.oclc.org/stable/j.ctt5vm45s.8>, 54; cf. Scott, *Against the Grain*, 169 and 175.

names underscoring the possibility of continued loyalty to the ancestral deity,⁵⁰ it is difficult to say with precision what demonym the people would have used to describe themselves.⁵¹

According to Jursa, textual and archaeological evidence point to population growth in urban centers during the sixth-century BCE, this growth set in motion "a positive-feedback cycle in the economy" in which cities (as administrative, religious, and economic centers) saw an increase in division of specialized labor, and local agriculture flourished.⁵² Beginning under Neo-Babylonian rule, the economy continued to flourish through the end of the sixth-century BCE.⁵³

Why did Persia push for migration to Yehud? According to Berquist, "Some scholars have suggested that the Persian, or Achaemenid, Empire was more open to religious freedoms than were previous empires, and others have argued that the Persians shared a monotheism with the Jews and thus possessed a certain sympathy for the Yehudites' religion." Yet, he notes that despite the appearance of the decrees of Cyrus being centered on human rights, these policies were tools of imperial domination. Concerning the second supposition, Cyrus and his successors were polytheistic, worshiping both Persian and foreign deities.⁵⁴

⁵⁰ Michael David Coogan, "Life in the Diaspora: Jews at Nippur in the Fifth Century B.C.," *BA* 37, no. 1 (1974): 6-12. doi:10.2307/3211013. 8-9.

⁵¹ According to Berquist the construct of ethnicity as practiced during this period was not necessarily practiced as recorded in the HB; though much of the text appears concerned with genealogies, these were created to protect the wealth and position of the elite repatriates during the Persian period, *Controlling Corporeality*, 158. This was further expanded in a course on Family and Household in Ancient Israel (Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, CA, Fall 2017) when he noted that it was common practice that one affiliated with those in the community in which they lived, rather than their genealogical affiliations. His current position incorporates the ambiguity that exists in the text to the discussion, "when we see gentilics or parental indications or other ethnic markers, we do not know if such terms indicate place of birth, place of prior residence, place of current residence, tribal affiliation, guild like affiliation, or a nickname," text message to author, May 5, 2019.

⁵² Jursa, "Factor Markets in Babylonia," 175.

⁵³ Jursa, "Factor Markets in Babylonia," 175.

⁵⁴ Berquist, *Persia's Shadow*, 25.

While Nebuchadnezzar and his successors had ample work for the deported populations of conquered nations in their building and restoration projects in Babylon,⁵⁵ Persians did not have a desire to enlarge cities. The empire sought to have resources (human and monetary) from densely populated areas spread throughout the empire.⁵⁶ The movement of citizens to key locations, with encouragement in the form of land grants and political positions, meant Persia not only had a devoted base in the periphery of the empire, but well supplied military throughout all of its provinces.⁵⁷

Another factor was the potential issue of desertification. Babylon was a multicultural city with flourishing migrant populations from Elam, Egypt, and the Eastern Mediterranean region. Massimo Livi-Bacci points out that with the right resources an immigrant population can out produce the native population causing a strain on resources.⁵⁸ Changes in population size can lead to the desertification of an arid region.⁵⁹ There is evidence that Cyrus acquainted himself with the records of previous empires.⁶⁰ It is possible that the Persian emperors may have seen benefit in dispersing the population of major cities in order to keep from overtaxing the agricultural land servicing them, thereby extending the economic boom of the mid-sixth century BCE into the next generation.

⁵⁵ Jursa, "Factor Markets in Babylonia," 176.

⁵⁶ "Factor Markets in Babylonia," 180.

⁵⁷ Berquist, private conversation; cf. Gottwald, *Politics*, 141.

⁵⁸ Massimo Livi-Bacci, *A Short History of Migration*, Carl Ipsen, trans. (Polity Press: Cambridge, UK, 2012), 13.

⁵⁹ F. Kenneth Hare, Robert W. Kates, and Andrew Warren, "The Making of Deserts: Climate, Ecology, and Society," *Economic Geography* 53, no. 4 (1977): 332-46. doi:10.2307/142970. 339-340.

⁶⁰ *CANE*, 1040.

This, in addition to the Persian rulers, lack of experience with the supply and rule of large urban centers moved them to shrink the Babylonian cities for better management of both urban and rural areas. This was not an unknown or untested form of governance, much like what was seen during the eighth and sixth-century BCE Greek practice of *apoikoi*,⁶¹ and indeed, it does appear to be the governance style preferred. As the populations slowly spread across the empire, Persia put satraps, members of the diasporic⁶² communities who were loyal to Persia, in place to govern the provinces. The mid-enfranchised members of the Persian placed Jewish community would likely have generational trauma, which would have manifested itself in the perpetuation of oppression and colonial actions upon entering Yehud. Without realizing their own oppression, these migrants and satraps would have experienced Stockholm syndrome, identifying with their overlords, further motivating them to abuse those they were governing.

Though the descendants of a forced migration, many in the diasporic community did well in Babylon, as noted above. Why then did the exiled Judeans choose to move to the land of their grandparents? These migrants likely migrated for economic and social benefit. By moving to Yehud, those in a lower to middle stations in the Babylonian community would be seeking to increase their status. The tales of their grandparents lives in the *homeland* where they owned their land and had servants was not far from their minds.⁶³

⁶¹ “The process of migrating to, settling, and founding ... colonies ... carried out under the guidance of an assigned leader ... who employed specific criteria to select those migrants who would maximize the success of the colonies.” Livi-Bacci, *Short History*, 25. This occurred on the coastline of the Black Sea, Anatolia, and Northern Africa, and its success would have been known by others in the region.

⁶² The distinctions between forced and voluntary, and migrant vs. diaspora are contemporarily defined concepts that did not exist during the sixth century BCE; however, these contemporary terms are useful in helping describe the expectations and outcomes of the migratory population. My choice to refer to the exilic population as diaspora while in Babylon is influenced by Dufoix, *Diasporas*; and Kenny, *Diaspora*.

⁶³ The lives being recalled are perfectly described in the pre-exilic prophetic texts. And though the texts do not paint a charming picture of the elite of Judah, who were carried into exile, it is unlikely that the individuals

Concisely stated by Femke Stock, “at the core of the concept of diaspora lies the image of a remembered home.”⁶⁴ In the years spent in exile, many of the Judean diaspora remained in enclaves that encouraged the maintenance/creation of a Jewish identity through the retelling of stories of the homeland and religious practices to be passed down.⁶⁵ For those who did not find political or financial success in their new home these stories and rituals helped maintain a connection to the homeland. With each retelling new information would likely have been inserted into the tale. Memories change, often reflecting the current environment of the person remembering.⁶⁶ To this point Stock notes, “memories of home are no factual reproduction of a fixed past.”⁶⁷ It is easy to see how the diasporic community of Babylonian Jews unwittingly incorporated new rituals, laws, and adapted histories into the communal memory.

necessarily imagined themselves as those described. Rather, they were the good ones who simply got swept up in the destruction of Jerusalem. The idea that the exilic community would recall their former lives with nostalgia is on full display in the exilic prophetic texts that call on the exilic community to be hope-filled.

⁶⁴ Femke Stock, “Home and Memory,” in *Diasporas: Concepts, Intersections, Identities*, Kim Knott and Sean McLoughlin eds. (New York: Zed Books, 2010), 24.

⁶⁵ For a larger discussion on enclaves in diasporic communities see Dufoix, *Diasporas*. For use of remembering in community building see Stock, “Home and Memory.”

⁶⁶ Social psychologists studying memory and recall have found that memories are often tainted by the surrounding and knowledge of those asked to recall an event, even when the person conducting the interview is pointedly working to prevent memory perversion. Diana Selmeczy and Ian G. Dobbins found in their research “that observers cannot fully isolate environmental information introduced during memory retrieval,” which impacts the accuracy of the memory, “Ignoring Memory Hints: The Stubborn Influence of Environmental Cues on Recognition Memory.” *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 43, no. 9 (2017): 1466. doi:10.1037/xlm0000383.supp (Supplemental). This is supported by the work of Donna J. Bridge and Joel L. Voss, “Hippocampal Binding of Novel Information with Dominant Memory Traces Can Support Both Memory Stability and Change,” *Journal of Neuroscience* 34, no. 6 (2014): 2203-2213. DOI:10.1523/JNEUROSCI.3819-13.2014. As Voss noted in an interview concerning his and Bridges work, “our memories aren’t perfect. They’re not like tape recorders. There’s a small current of thought that thinks these failures aren’t necessarily a bad thing. Memory is not intended to allow you to remember what you did last week, or remember your childhood. The point is to help you make good choices right now,” Nancy Shute, “Our Brains Rewrite Our Memories, Putting Present In The Past,” <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2014/02/04/271527934/our-brains-rewrite-our-memories-putting-present-in-the-past>.

⁶⁷ Stock, “Home and Memory,” 24.

Fifty years out of Jerusalem the oldest survivors had idealized the homeland. These glorified memories were picked up by the discontent who were given the opportunity to “reclaim” positions of power, offered property for their families, and distance from the empire by returning to Yehud. As Johnny Miles notes,

The imperial government of Persia had recruited this group of politically and economically dominant elites from the Babylonian Jewish community, and had mandated and financed the reconstruction of the temple. When in Palestine, these immigrants retained the social organization developed in Mesopotamia, setting up an assembly organized by ancestral houses with land owning citizens and temple personnel.⁶⁸

Having found success in Babylon, which was internalized as deserved or earned, the migrants would have latched on to the idea that they had worked their way to the top or could do so.⁶⁹

Even still, it is clear that migration to Yehud was not desired by all. Despite the encouragement by the Achaemenid Empire to repatriate, there is fifth-century evidence that members of the Jewish community continued to live and thrive in the Mesopotamian region (some even as bankers and landholders).⁷⁰

Adapted YHWHism and the Indigenous Plight

The loss of a culture can be done in just three generations. It doesn't require force or punishment. These adaptations can occur through attempts of migrants to re-create and

⁶⁸ Johnny Miles, *Constructing the Other in Ancient Israel and the USA* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2011), 63.

⁶⁹ This mimesis, perhaps mistook as jealousy, is unconscious, and a driving force in human psychology. people cannot help but mirror those around them. Cf. Oughourlian, Jean-Michel. *The Mimetic Brain*. Translated by Trevor Cribben Merrill. (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2016).

⁷⁰ Mark Altaweel and Andrea Squitieri, "The Changing Nature of Cities and Other Settlements," in *Revolutionizing a World: From Small States to Universalism in the Pre-Islamic Near East*, Altaweel, Mark, and Andrea Squitieri, eds. (London: UCL Press, 2018). <http://www.jstor.org.fuller.idm.oclc.org/stable/j.ctt21c4td4.9>. 141-141. Cf. Coogan, "Life in the Diaspora," 8-9.

remember their traditions, blending of cultures, deliberate actions by a colonizing group to influence an indigenous population, and the response of the indigenous people to preserve their beliefs through hidden transcripts.

The adoption of new traditions and practices happens in daily life creating a hybridity of culture and language in a diasporic community.⁷¹ Despite even deliberate choices to re-create religious practices “this re-creation ... was not a mere reproduction of the practices and institutions in the homeland. Rather, it often incorporated cultural and religious dimensions of the host society.”⁷² As social creatures, people look to those around them in order to determine the social norms and they adopt these practices through mimesis.⁷³ Add in a reward system, and attitudes, practices, and traditions are quickly swapped for those that prove most beneficial (i.e. go to the temple: receive food). Even if a deliberate choice is made to reject the new, it can be easily incorporated via the polemic itself.⁷⁴ And still some portions of another culture may seem

⁷¹ Hybridity, a somewhat debated term in diaspora scholarship, recognizes the migrant adoption of aspects of the host population from technological innovations to language to customs, the diasporic community “rework, reform, and reconfigure” with the result of a hybrid culture or identity. John Hutnyk, “Hybridity,” *Diasporas: Concepts, Intersections, Identities*, Kim Knott and Sean McLoughlin, eds. (New York: Zed Books, 2010), 60.

⁷² Manuel A. Vasquez, “Diasporas and Religion,” Eds Kim Knott and Sean McLoughlin, *Diasporas: Concepts, Intersections, Identities* (Zed Books; New York, 2010), 130.

⁷³ Mimesis appealing to the basest part of humanity - emotion. Oughourlian, initially identified this phenomenon after observing a possession/moment of hysteria and in the observation of watching children learn from parents. It is an “imitation in space ... the imitation of apparent gestures ... extended across time through repetition, which enables not only language learning but little by little the deferred representation and thus gradual constitution of memory” *The Mimetic Brain*, 34 The adoption of practices happens on holy days, when people are swept up in the call and response in almost an hysterical manner.

⁷⁴ Nahum M. Sarna contrasts Genesis 1 to Enuma Elish, though not stating it outright, there is a nod to the point that Genesis 1 can be read as a response to the creation account of the Mesopotamians, *Understanding Genesis: The World of the Bible in the Light of History*, The Heritage of Biblical Israel 1 (New York: Schocken Books, 1970), 8-10. In the comparing and contrasting of these two myths, one can see how the one consciously or not was influenced by the other.

so beneficial (and not in conflict) that they are quickly adopted as a means of preserving order.⁷⁵ So, the religious language and laws of the empire become incorporated through mimicry and rewards.

A few possibilities that explain the tension between the inhabitants of Yehud and the immigrating Babylonian Jewish community can be summed up thus: 1) upon entering Yehud the repatriates did not see their own relatives; rather, they saw a group of people performing unrecognizable cultic practices and telling obviously perverted stories about their history and their deity;⁷⁶ 2) the mid-enfranchised repatriating community knew that the inhabitants found in Yehud were the descendants of the remnant and they set about adapting the histories and laws to favor themselves over the remnant using the work of the exilic and postexilic prophets as support. Of course, things are rarely so clean. There is textual and archaeological evidence that migration was slow for the first few decades and the inhabitants and immigrants intermarried as the migrant population did not see themselves as set apart from the remnant. Rather, the remnant were viewed in a positive light, "obedient to [YHWH], the recipients of salvation oracles, and the recipients of other divine messages."⁷⁷ However, as the repatriating population increased, tensions arose between the two groups. Initially surrounding the resurrection of the temple in Jerusalem followed by more serious claims concerning the legitimacy of the indigenous peoples to be rulers in the land. The literate priestly and scribal groups incorporated the פִּילגְשִׁים/*pīlagšîm*

⁷⁵ Scott notes that monoculture cropping was a practice encouraged by empires as it is easily taxable, *Against the Grain*, 133-134. Within the biblical law exist commands for monoculture cropping Lev 19:19, cf. Deut 22:9

⁷⁶ As is described by the accounts in Ezra-Nehemiah.

⁷⁷ Middlemas, "Beyond the Myth of the Empty Land," 181.

tales into Genesis as a way to undermine those who were not descendants of those taken into exile.⁷⁸

Those who had been left behind and were living in the land autonomously from 587 to 539, likely in the same kinship structure that had existed throughout Israel in the pre-monarchic period and in the rural areas during the monarchic period.⁷⁹ According to Berquist, despite the official date of 539, there was little migration before 522 noting, “the Cyrus edict didn’t do what people claimed to encourage migration.”⁸⁰ With the first trickle of repatriates occurring more than a decade after the decree, the first point of strife appeared surrounding the building of the temple.⁸¹

THE BEGINNING OF DTRH

During the post-exilic period traditions from the region were gathered into a collection, a comprehensive history of the Levant from the point of Israel’s conquest of the region through the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish exile, that has come to be known as the DtrH. The task of the folklorists and redactors who worked on this monumental project was to gather the

⁷⁸ See "Predecessor and Antecedent Biblical Texts" in chapter 3 above.

⁷⁹ As Bendor writes, "the historical sum total is that in Israel ... a productive free society persisted, based on a stable kinship structure," for the entirety of the pre-exilic period "from the time of settlement until the end of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah," *Social Structure*, 283 and 31. This in conjunction with the arguments of Berquist and Faust noted above concerning the nominal impact the exile had on the rural communities lends support to the idea that the indigenous of Yehud had maintained a relatively autonomous existence during the exilic period.

⁸⁰ Jon. L. Berquist, "Resistance and Accommodation in the Persian Empire," in *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance*, Richard A. Horsley, ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 54.

⁸¹ Berquist, "Isaiah 56-66," 23-42.

traditions of the people and weave them together with the purpose of supporting Persian rule and a centralized religion and worship site that would become the center of culture and taxation.⁸²

Upon the return from Babylon, the children and grandchildren of the Judean elite moved into the land with the expectation of *reclaiming* the mantle of their fathers.⁸³ Under the reign of Darius, the emperor encouraged local satrapies to codify their laws and traditions.⁸⁴ The cultural and political climate of the region along with the recent history of the peoples in the region and those returning to it had a tremendous impact on what traditions and myths were being perpetuated, adapted, and preserved.⁸⁵

According to Robert Redfield, local traditions are more stable and more likely to be accurate, as they are tied to a place.⁸⁶ Shrine stories are told in a place and are repeated in a place the same way each telling. It is this point that would have given space for a created collection of stories to be readily recorded by a folklorist. The indigenous population knew the local traditions

⁸² Person, *The Deuteronomistic School*, 58; Gerstenberger, *Israel in the Persian Period*, 108.

⁸³ According to Sweeney, there was some expectation that Zerubbabel, the appointed governor of Yehud during Darius' reign was planning a rebellion, *Apocalyptic Literature*, Lecture Series, Claremont School of Theology, Claremont, CA, Fall 2013. Berquist refutes the Zerubbabel rebellion, citing Zerubbabel's long record of loyalty to the Achaemenid Empire as well as the impracticality of a rebellion during the time it is suggested to have been plotted, *Persia's Shadow*, 63-65. Alternately, Berquist suggests the power struggle between the immigrant and native populations during Darius' reign was centered around the temple project, "Isaiah 56-66," 35. In either case, tension developed between the remnant who were accustomed to kinship governance and local shrines as the migrant population attempted to shift governance and religion to a centralized urban setting.

⁸⁴ Berquist, *Persia's Shadow*, 55.

⁸⁵ During the 20th century two theories developed around the creation of the DtrH: the Scandinavian School and Martin Noth, both theories now known as the DtrH. Both parties focused on the collecting of oral traditions to make up the collection. Both theories focus on the final form of the text with less attention on the early formation of each strand. However, according to Ivan Engnell (of the Scandinavian School) the DtrH was a work woven through time by groups or circles eventually becoming an amalgamated text. Cf. Douglas A. Knight, *Rediscovering the Traditions of Israel: The Development of the Tradition-Historical Research of the Old Testament, with Special Consideration of Scandinavian Contributions*, SBLDS 9 (Missoula, MT: SBL, 1973). This is in contrast to Martin Noth's view that a single author ingeniously crafted the text using traditions that spanned centuries and kingdoms, *The DtrH*, 76, cf. 99.

⁸⁶ Robert Redfield, *The Primitive World and Its Transformations*, The Messenger Lectures on the Evolution of Civilization, Cornell University, 1952 (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1953).

and history of the region and likely became a primary source for the folklorist. Meanwhile the postexilic debates concerning centralization of religion and governance became imbedded into the recorded history as well. While the priests and scribes had a strong handle on law and state religion, the folklorists would have had to rely heavily on the indigenous memories of site-specific histories in Yehud.

RESISTANCE THROUGH MEMORY

Finding themselves disenfranchised, the indigenous population turned to their memories of a distant past in which they were a people made up of distinct tribes with a common goal. It is in these legends that they found strength - a time when every person played an integral part of society without individualism, but with protection. This is displayed in the Book of Joshua and into the first part of the Book of Judges.

In Judges 8-9 the audience is introduced to the first potential King, who is swiftly put down. As one moves through the Book of Judges the region falls further and further into chaos and moves in the direction of Kingship. The PRDtrH specifically follows each of the ruling tribes and their relationships to the peasant/uncivilized members of society. Time and again these kings are found to be killers and rapists of their own people, as well as unfaithful to YHWH. The distrust of the elite was not limited to the descendants of the royal tribes, but included the priestly class, Judges 17-20 (the stories of the Levites and the raping of the פילגש/pilegeš). The entire DtrH instills a sense of disillusionment with Israelite rulers. Though this is clear outside of the Pilagshean Ribbon, it becomes most poignant with the late addition of these strands of text.

By the time of Ezra-Nehemiah the indigenous community found themselves being stripped entirely of not only their autonomy, but their citizenship. Initially choosing to intermarry

with the migrant population, they began to experience pushback from leaders in the repatriating community concerning social practices, first during the construction of the Jerusalem temple,⁸⁷ and later rejected as rightful inhabitants of Yehud.⁸⁸

In the mid-fifth-century BCE new terminology was introduced to describe the populations of Yehud: citizens and foreigners (Ezr 10). “The citizen community was a privileged group with restricted membership not coextensive with the wider population of the Yehud province;” additionally, the foreigners were excluded from the temple community and any other benefits bestowed upon Jews despite being able to trace their own ancestry as tied to the land.⁸⁹ The remnant, the indigenous population of Yehud, were unable to maintain a place for themselves among the Babylonian Jews, nor would they accept the new moniker of “foreigner;” by their own account the indigenous people were silenced, marginalized, and ostracized. It is under these circumstances that they took on the title פִּלְגֶּשִׁים/*pīlagšīm* highlighting their own history or marginalization and suppression throughout the pre-exilic period. Where the priests and scribes used the term to insinuate a class of un-citizens or barbarians who were not completely off limits to procreate with in the accounts of Gen; the indigenous of Yehud took the title to undermine the elite class as being the true destructive force of Israel, Judah, and YHWHism leading to the Babylonian as laid out in Judges through Kings.

CONCLUSION

⁸⁷ Berquist, “Isaiah 56-66,” 36.

⁸⁸ The lack of פִּלְגֶּשִׁים/*pīlegeš* in Ezra-Nehemiah was a deliberate choice of the author of that text. Recognizing self-identification as empowering, they rejected this term, choosing instead to use older (anachronistic) gentilics as a way to undermine and alienate the Pilagsheans.

⁸⁹ Miles, *Constructing the Other*, 62.

The climate in Yehud under Persian reign left nothing to be desired for the descendants of the remnant, the indigenous population of Yehud. As the Achaemenid Empire aged and more Jews migrated from Babylon the indigenous people became increasingly marginalized. The Empire's use of a mid-enfranchised segment of the population to control one of its providences eventually led to the elimination of the indigenous population, an all too common occurrence throughout history. In many cases the propaganda surrounding these migrations is shrouded in divine right language with the intent of straight forward colonization, genocide, and forced migration. This colonization, also bound in divine right, seems significant in that the mid-enfranchised community from Babylon claimed possession of a land once ruled by their ancestors, causing them to feel doubly entitled. As the tension rose between the migrant and indigenous populations, the histories being collected reflected not only the past, but the present.

It is significant to underscore the role oppression played in forming the psyche of the repatriates. The mid-enfranchised Babylonian Jewish migrant community was living with generation trauma (from their predecessor's forced migration and enslavement) and Stockholm syndrome. Their movement and actions were based in hope for a better future. The purpose in pointing out the abuses they perpetuated on the indigenous people is not to demonize the migrant population. Rather, it is to recognize the perpetuation of abuse from the powerful through an oppressed group's abuse of an even more disenfranchised population.

CHAPTER 5

THE DEUTERONOMISTIC HISTORY PILAGSHEAN RIBBON

INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides an exegetical study of the Pilagshean passages within the DtrH. I offer a translation of the verses in which the term פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* appears and the verses in which the one identified as Pilagshean is referenced as acting or being acted upon. These verses specifically will be exegeted with hermeneutical treatment of the surrounding verses as needed.

As noted above, Ezekiel used the dehumanic term to describe denigrate men from Egypt. Following this, the priestly redactors of Genesis adopted the dehumanic term. They applied it to anyone in the Levant who did not originate in the east but was permissible to procreate with due to appropriate cultic practices. In the DtrH, PRDtr appropriated the term and used it as a demonym for those in Yehud and Samaria who could not document their ancestry. As a dehumanic, פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* could appropriately be translated as barbarian or peasant; however, its use in DtrH implies geographical and political affiliation. Therefore, translating the term as “barbarian” is insufficient in the DtrH. While a case can be made for translating it as “peasant” in some instances, its function as a demonym operates in every instance of its appearance throughout the DtrH. Therefore, I will render the term with the proper noun: Pilagshean.¹

¹ The use of the possessive with פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* throughout the DtrH suggests that at the time of redaction, the term covered a class of people who could be possessed like slaves (2 Sam 13:31; 2 Kgs 12:20) or officers (Jud 9:28). However, the unpossessed use of the term of geographic or tribal affiliation would suggest that it is not a societal role, rather it is a designation for a people. It is significant to underscore that the use of פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* in the DtrH was still developing as a demonym and can justifiably be translated as peasant, local, and even barbarian in most cases. However, as the appearance of the term in Genesis 25:6 can easily be translated as referring to a people group, and is solidified as such in Esther and Song of Songs, it will be translated here and throughout the chapter as Pilagshean to highlight that the term should be viewed as an ungended title for a people group/class, not as a sexual role for women.

Within DtrH, the term פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* appears in the Book of Judges (the פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* in Shechem, mother of Abimelech, 8:31; and the פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* from Judah, who was gang raped, 19-20), in 2 Samuel (the פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš*, Rizpah daughter of Aiah, 3:7 and 21:11; the פִּילָגְשִׁים/*pīlagšîm* of Jerusalem, 5:13, 15:16, 16:21-22, 19:6, and 20:3), and 1 Kings (the six hundred פִּילָגְשִׁים/*pīlagšîm*, no note of geographic origin, 11:3). The mention of these people is both ambiguous and specific. In the five stories that use this term, only one person is named, Rizpah (2 Sam 3:7). Four times a location is associated with the people (Judg 8:31; 19:1; 2 Sam 3:7; and 5:3). In three instances the persons known as פִּילָגְשִׁים/*pīlagšîm* are the objects of trauma (Judg 19; 2 Sam 16:21-22; 21:8-10). In four cases cultic practices are implied or directly noted (Judg 8:31; 19:2-8; 2 Sam 21:10; 1 Kgs 11:3-4).

In this chapter I will attempt to stay with a strict textually synchronic reading with little reference to a postexilic context. For each thread there will be a translation,² translation notes, and interpretation of each passage. In some cases, the postexilic political or religious undertone in the text is too significant to ignore and will be addressed. However, the main purpose of this chapter is to offer a reading of each PTDtrH noting terminology, describing parallels between the individual Threads (to show overarching themes), and to highlight intra-biblical textual parallels that underscore the reading of these passages as necessarily connected.

THE PILAGSHEAN IN SHECHEM (JUDGES 8:31; 9:1, 3, AND 18)

Translation

² The translation will only include verses wherein the Pilagshean character is referenced, though the commentary will address the surrounding text.

⁸³¹Now hisⁱ Pilagshean, who was in Shechem, she also bore him a son, and he called the name Abimelech.

⁹¹Abimelech, son of Jerubbaal, went to Shechem to the relativesⁱⁱ of his mother and spoke to them, to all of the clan of the house of the father of his mother saying...

³ The relatives of his mother spoke all these words concerning him in the ears of all the masters of Shechem and their hearts followed after Abimelech, “because,” they said, “he is our relative”...

¹⁸ “and today you stoodⁱⁱⁱ against the house of my father and killed his children, seventy humans, on one stone and made Abimelech, son of his slave-wife, king over the masters of Shechem because he is your relative.”

i. Gideon /Jerubbaal

ii. lit. brothers, but the assumption of all men is incorrect as there is no neutered plural in Hebrew. Therefore, here and throughout I will translate all masculine plurals as neutered following the example of Gafney in her work on female prophets.³

iii. The accepted translation here as “risen up” (HALOT) or “*arise*, in hostile sense” (BDB) implying a rebellion. Yet the term does not necessarily mean uprising, it also has roots in עָמַד “opponent.” To say “arise” implies a subordinate position, while “stand” suggests one of equality.

Interpretation

Gideon/Jerubbaal is the valiant warrior (6:12), called by YHWH to save Israel from Midian (6:14) and to tear down the altar of the Baal and the Asherah in Ophrah (6:25).⁴ While the roles of judge and savior have, up to this point in the biblical text, not been dynastic or human elected positions, Jether, his first-born son is brought up in chapter 8, where he proved himself lacking in the constitution to follow in his father’s path (v.20) and is never mentioned again. Though the one-sentence story of Jether may seem out of place, its mention is justified in the introduction of the proposition for the creation of a dynasty in v.23. Jether’s inability to slay

³ Gafney, *Daughters of Miriam*, 160.

⁴ אֹפְרָה/Ophrah is mentioned numerous times in the MT. Within the Gideon cycle it is presumed to be near Shechem (though the text does not say this), whereas its location in Joshua 18:21-23 and 1 Sam 13:17, is notably in Benjamin. This distinction between the two can be attributed to the LXX’s treatment of the name: Judges 6:11, 24; 8:27, 32; 9:5 Εφραθα/*Ephratha*; Joshua 18:21-23 and 1 Sam 13:17 Αφ(α)ρα/*Aph(a)ra*. This is a possible gloss over of what would have been an ancient feud between the Northern Kingdom and the Southern Kingdom concerning legitimacy in existence, claims to the ancient hero, and deity worship. This will be discussed in more detail in chapter 6.

an enemy and Gideon/Jerubbaal's refusal of the ruler's role foreshadows what unfolds in chapter 9.

Upon completion of the missions of the deity, the people of Israel attempted to elect Gideon/Jerubbaal and his son and his son's son to rule מֶשֶׁל/*mšl* among them.⁵ A role he rejected noting that "YHWH will rule among you" (8:22-23).⁶ As the cycle draws to a close Dtr credited him with rest in the land for forty years(8:28).

Though there is an expectation by the audience that the following line should report Gideon/Jerubbaal's death and a description of the downward spiral of the people of Israel in order to set the stage for the next judge or savior to be lifted up, there is a narrative interjection.⁷ The first thread of the PRDtrH is a jarring interjection. Where Dtr would have ended Gideon/Jerubbaal's line, PRDtr extends the possibility of dynastic leadership from the line of Gideon/Jerubbaal and begins to lay the groundwork for arguments surrounding the choosing of leadership.

Up to this point in the Book of Judges, the narrator has paid no attention to the mother of the deity-ordained leader of Israel⁸ and only rarely noted the sexual partner of a judge/savior (cf.

⁵ Wolfgang Bludorn explains the differences between מֶשֶׁל/*māšal* and מֶלֶךְ/*melek*. Where מֶלֶךְ/*melek* focuses on the person reigning and מֶשֶׁל/*māšal* focuses on the larger impact of the person ruling. He also notes that in extending the call beyond Gideon/Jerubbaal, it was expected that he pass on the ability to lead to his heirs, something he already felt he had failed to do with his first born, Jether (v.21). *Yahweh Versus Baalism, Yahweh Versus Baalism: A Theological Reading of the Gideon-Abimelech Narrative*, JSOTSup 329 (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 167-168.

⁶ The English "over" brings to mind the Hebrew עַל/*al* whereas the preposition used here is ב/*b*. The people did not tell Gideon they wanted someone to reign over מֶלֶךְ/*melek al* them. Rather, they told him to rule among them מֶשֶׁל בֵּהֶם/*māšal bēhem*. The reverse of what Jotham accuses the Shechemites of later (9:18).

⁷ In several of the previous stories the judge/savior died (Judg 2:8; 3:11; 4:1); in Joshua's case, his burial was described (Judg 2:9); following this the people were described as going after other deities (Judg 2:11; 3:12; 4:1; 6:1).

⁸ The only mothers mentioned prior to Abimelech's mother are Deborah (5:7), mother of Israel and Sisera's mother (5:28), and Gideon's unnamed mother (8:19).

Achsah was the wife of Othniel, 1:12; and Deborah was the wife of Lapidoth, 4:4). Yet, in 8:30-31 we are introduced to the sexual partners of Gideon/Jerubbaal specifically in light of his *other*, previously unnoted, children. That there was no confusion regarding whose children were described, the interjection is bookended with the father's name and his lineage ("Jerubbaal the son of Joash," v.29; and "Gideon the son of Joash," v.32). PRDtr makes strategic word choices in vv.30-31. Note: "there were seventy sons for Gideon, going out of his body, as there were for him many wives;" as compared to: "and his Pilagshean in Shechem, she also bore for him a son, and he gave him the name Abimelech." These verses are pregnant with inheritance language.

First, throughout the HB, sons of wives were assumed to inherit unless specifically stated otherwise. In a question of dynastic inheritance, then, this too would be the expectation. By noting that Gideon/Jerubbaal had seventy sons with his multitude of wives, PRDtr is underscoring that a dynasty is possible. The Pilagshean of Shechem is not called a wife by the narrator at any point in the text.⁹ Introduced in the first thread of the ribbon is the wives vs Pilagshean juxtaposition.

Within the DtrH the Pilagshean belonging to rulers of Israel are distinctly not called wives in four of the five threads.¹⁰ Three of the four instances the ruler is a king (Saul, David, and Solomon). This is the only case in which the ruler is not a king; however, the name of the child, Abimelech, suggests otherwise. Only two of the "wife vs Pilagshean" women are reported to have children (the Pilagshean of Shechem, 8:31; and Rizpah 2 Sam 21:8). Ironically this is the

⁹ At best she is called an אִמָּה/ *'āmā* "maid-servant" by Jotham, but there is nothing in the text outside of that statement suggesting that it was an accurate description of the woman. While there is law concerning an אִמָּה/ *'āmā* who is taken for a wife, support that this is what happened is absent from the text. Jotham's reference to Abimelech's mother as אִמָּה/ *'āmā* will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

¹⁰ That one is called a wife in DtrH (Jud 19:1), highlights that being Pilagshean does not preclude one from being a wife, cf. Gen 30:4a "And she gave Bilhah, her slave, for his wife."

only son of a Pilagshean in the DtrH, who not only survives to *seek* their dynastic inheritance, but successfully becomes a king (though his success as a king is questionable).¹¹ In the case of Rizpah and Saul's sons, Rizpah's identification as Pilagshean did not save them from revenge against their father.¹²

Second, the wives of Gideon did not יָלַד/*yālad* “bare” his sons; however, the Pilagshean יָלַד/*yālad* “bore” Abimelech.¹³ While a child being born is not as rare or significant as a child who is conceived and born, it is still not an exceptionally common report.¹⁴ In the Book of Judges, only three women are reported as bearing children (the Pilagshean from Shechem, 8:31; Gilead's wife, 11:2; and Samson's mother, 13:24).¹⁵ It is significant that Abimelech's and Jephthah's mothers are distinctly not named as wives, yet both men held leadership roles in Israel.

In a few short verses an argument is made in support of the non-elite of the region choosing their own king. In the final verses of chapter 8 and the first few verses of chapter 9 the reader is reminded of Gideon/Jerubbaal's ancestry (twice, vv.29 and 32), mention is made of the mother of one of his children (the only woman mentioned in relationship to Gideon/Jerubbaal (v.31), it is underscored that the people of Israel acted independently of YHWH and worshiped Baal and Baalim (vv.33 and 34), Gideon/Jerubbaal's children are introduced (vv.31 and 9:5).

¹¹ As was the case in Genesis, being labeled Pilagshean did not necessarily preclude one from inheritance.

¹² This will be discussed in greater detail below.

¹³ Of the nearly five hundred times יָלַד/*yālad* “to bear” appears in the HB, it occurs in the feminine one third of the time, of which approximately 12% are in Josh-Kgs. Less than 2% of the total feminine occurrences of יָלַד/*yālad* are found in Judges.

¹⁴ “To conceive” is paired with “bare” around 20% of the time in the whole HB.

¹⁵ Gilead begat Jephthah (11:1), the only judge to יָלַד/*yālad* “bear.” His wife begat his other sons.

One being named Abimelech (“my father is king”) by someone other than his mother.¹⁶ The other children, from a different mother, go unnamed save Jotham. Abimelech and Jotham, sole surviving heirs of Gideon/Jerubbaal; the former portrayed as a mass murderer having killed nearly all of his half-siblings (seventy of which were introduced and slayed in the same verse, one of which survived by hiding, v.5). The latter is presented as the defender of YHWH.¹⁷

Within the Gideon/Jerubbaal Cycle, Gideon/Jerubbaal is a descendant of Manasseh (6:15),¹⁸ yet claims of Benjaminite heritage are possible too.¹⁹ Dtr connects Joash to Ophrah, though with no indication of exact geographic location, and to Abiezer, at the very least through paronomasia, or punning.²⁰ However, Dtr explicitly notes that Joash is of the אֲבִי הָעֶזְרִי / *’ābî hā’ezrî* (“my father is the help”) in Ophrah and that he is of Israel (7:14). The Pilagshean woman, mother of Abimelech, is from Shechem, but her tribal affiliation is not mentioned beyond being Pilagshean.

¹⁶ Ljung notes this feature as a hint to the lateness of the text, as the naming of the children in early Israelite tradition was done by the mother, *Silence or Suppression*, 16-17. Here the understanding could be that the father named his son – despite the contradiction to his own proclamation in 8:23.

On the other hand, Schneider notes that the MT does not explicitly state that Gideon/Jerubbaal named Abimelech, even suggesting that the name may have been given to him later (possibly a self-identification). She also highlights that the verb used here שָׁם “to set/place” is used in renaming (2 Kgs 17:34; Neh 9:7; Dan 1:7) not naming at birth. Finally, Boling and Schneider refer to the placing of the name Abimelech, as arrogance, Boling, *Judges*, 170 and Schneider, *Judges*, 130.

If the tale was indeed a late injection written by the indigenous population in an attempt to establish their own right to pick a leader and rule themselves, then this would have absolutely been considered arrogant by the migrating Babylonian Jewish population.

¹⁷ Römer notes that the Jotham tale is also a late addition, with his parable possibly dating at late as the Hellenistic period, *So-Called DtrH*, 138n.

¹⁸ Schneider, *Judges*, 103.

¹⁹ See note above concerning Ophrah, 88, fn. 4.

²⁰ Within the Book of Judges Joash is described as אֲבִי הָעֶזְרִי / *’ābî hā’ezrî* translated as Abiezrite twice (through the Greek Αβιεσ(δ)πι/*abies(d)pi* a gentilic. Dtr does not connect אֲבִי הָעֶזְרִי / *’ābî hā’ezrî* to Manasseh within the cycle. Rather, this connection is made through punning. Cf אֲבִיעֶזֶר / *’ābî’ezer* in 1 Chronicles 17:18; אֲבִיעֶזֶר / *’ābî’ezer* in Numbers 26:30; and אֲבִיעֶזֶר / *’ābî’ezer* in Joshua 17:2. All of these are the names of a child of Manasseh, none of which matches the spelling in Judges 6-9.

Upon Gideon/Jerubbaal's death Abimelech petitioned his relatives in Shechem to support his rule מִשָּׁל/*mšl* of them. The masters of Shechem lifted up Abimelech not to rule מִשָּׁל/*mšl*, but to be king (מֶלֶךְ) (9:1-3 and 6).

While Abimelech means “my father is king;” אב/’*āb* does not exclusively translate as father; rather, ancestor and progenitor are legitimate translations of the term.²¹ In giving their hero the name Abimelech, the Pilagshean were asserting their right to pick their ruler and inform the reader that he too had the pedigree to rule. Noting that the Pilagshean was in Shechem (not from there) and that Gideon/Jerubbaal's father was an Israelite (without noting specific tribal affiliation, though residing in a Southern Kingdom city) lent authority to Abimelech's right to reign in the region.²²

Nearly all of chapter 9 continues the argument concerning right to rule. As soon as Abimelech was lifted by his relatives to reign (v 9), he was opposed by his half-brother, Jotham, who cursed the people for their choice (v 20). Abimelech's reign was short (two years) and ended in disaster and betrayal.

²¹ Alternately, according to Bluedorn, this title can refer to both a divine and human justification for Abimelech to become king, wherein it can be citing Gideon/Jerubbaal as well as YHWH and/or Baal, *YHWH*, 193.

²² The אב בית/’*bêt ‘āb* “house of the father” occurs in specific tales in the Book of Judges. Each of these tales point to questions of legitimacy concerning family and cult. Gideon/Jerubbaal (6:15 and 27), Abimelech and Jotham (9:1, 5, and 18), Jephthah (11:2 and 7), Samson (14:15, 19 and 16:31), Pilagshean woman (19:2 and 3). This is a multivalent phrase that refers both to the tribal house and the cult of the family, J. David Schloen, *The House of the Father as Fact and Symbol: Patrimonialism in Ugarit and the ancient Near East* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2001), 360. While the surface reading as family is complete, its cultic use brings depth to the reading of the text. Though the synchronic reading of the DtrH implies that precise deity worship was codified by the final stages of the text, these references to “the house of the father,” suggest that there may have still been debate over who was included and what practices were permissible.

These arguments are particularly poignant in the PTDtrH of the Book of Judges. In the case of Abimelech and Jotham there is a pitting of “the house of the father of his mother” (Baalites) against “the house of his father at Orpah” (YHWHists). Later in Judges 19 we see again the “house of the father.”

THE PILAGSHEAN WIFE FROM JUDAH (JUDGES 19:1-29 AND 20:4-6)

Translation

Judges 19:1-29

¹It came to pass in those days, when there was not a king in Israel, a Levite man was *dwelling as a* migrant in the far part of the mountain of Ephraim. He took for himself a wife,ⁱ a Pilagshean, from Bethlehem, Judah.ⁱⁱ ²His Pilagsehan became independentⁱⁱⁱ of him and went from him to the house of her father, to the house of Bethlehem Judah and she was there four months.^{iv} ³And her husband rose up and went after her to speak to her heart to make her return (his boy with him, and a pair of donkeys). She brought him to the house of her father, and the father of the girl^v saw him and he rejoiced to meet him.^{vi} ⁴His in-law,^{vii} the father of the girl, kept hold of him. He remained with him three days and they ate and they drank and they stayed the night there. ⁵And it came to pass on the fourth day they got up early in the morning and he arose to go. The father of the girl said to his in-law strengthen your heart with a piece of bread and after you will go. ⁶Then the two of them sat and ate together and they drank. Then the father of the girl said to the man, “please, decide to stay the night that your heart may become glad.” ⁷The man rose to go but his in-law coerced him, “Sit and stay the night here.” ⁸He got up early in the morning on the fifth day to go, but the father of the girl said, “please strengthen your heart and tarry until the day stretches out. And the two of them ate. ⁹When the man arose to go, (he and his Pilagshean and his boy), the father of the girl said to him, “Look, please, the day has gone to evening. Please stay the night. Look, the day is declining, stay here that your heart might be glad and tomorrow you will get up early and you will go to your way to your tent. ¹⁰But the man was not willing to stay the night and he rose and went, he came to a position opposite Jebus (that is Jerusalem) and with him a pair of saddled donkeys, and his Pilagshean with him. ¹¹They were beside Jebus and the day was mostly over. Then the boy said to his lord, “Come, please, let us turn aside to this city of Jebusites that we may stay the night in it. ¹²And his lord said to him we will not turn aside to the city of strangers who are not from the sons of Israel. Look, we will pass over to Gibeah. ¹³He said to his boy, “Come, let us draw near to one of the places to stay the night, in Gibeah or Ramah. ¹⁴And they passed over, and they went, the sun was going on them *when they were* beside Gibeah, which is in Benjamin. ¹⁵They turned there to go to stay the night in Gibeah and he went in and sat in the open place of the city, but there was no man receiving them to the house to stay the night. ¹⁸And he said to him, “We are passing over from Bethlehem, Judah to the far part of the mountain of Ephraim. I am from there.^{viii} I went to Bethlehem, Judah; I am going to the house of YHWH,^{ix} but there is no man receiving me to the house. ¹⁹There is also straw and feed for our donkeys and there is bread and wine for me and for your female servant and for the boy with your servants there is no need of

anything. ²⁰Then the old man said, “peace to you. Only all of your needs are upon me. Only do not spend the night in the open space. ²¹So he brought him^x to his house he mixed feed for the donkeys, they washed their feet, ate, and drank.

²²They were making their hearts glad. Shockingly, the men of the city, sons of villainy, surrounded the house pushing one another upon the door. They said to the old man, the lord of the house, saying, “send out the man who went to your house that we may know him.”

²⁴“Look, here is my virgin daughter and his Pilagshean. Please, let me send them out, rape them. Do to them the good in your eyes, but do not do this lewd thing to this man. ²⁵But the men were not willing to listen to him and the man seized and forced his Pilagshean to go outside to them. And they knew her and the played dirty tricks^{xi} on her all of the night until morning, as dawn lifted they dismissed her. ²⁶Then morning turned, the woman went and fell *at* the opening of the man’s house where her lord was, until the light. ²⁷Her lord rose in the morning and opened the doors of the house to go out, to go on his way, but shockingly the woman, his Pilagshean *was* falling at the opening of the house, her hand upon the threshold. ²⁸He said to her, “Rise and we will go, but there was no answer. Then he took her upon the donkey and he rose up and went to his place. ²⁹He went to his house and took the knife and he seized on his Pilagshean and he cut her to her bones for twelve pieces and he sent her in all the territories of Israel.

²⁰⁴The Levite man, the husband of the woman who was murdered,^{xii} answered, “I went to Gibeah, which belongs to Benjamin, me and my Pilagshean, to stay the night. ⁵The masters of Gibeah rose against me and they surrounded against me *at* the house *at* night. They intended to slay me, but they raped my Pilagshean and she died. ⁶I took my Pilagshean and I cut her up and I sent her to all the territory of the inheritance of Israel because they committed assault and lewdness^{xiii} in Israel.

i. There is much debate on the familial position of this woman cf. history of scholarship in chapter

2. I have opted to use wife based on word study cf. glossary.

ii. בית לחם יהודה 10x, 9 vv, 4 narratives: Jud 17:7-9; Jud 19:1, 2, 18; 1 Sam 17:12; Ruth 1:1 Distinctly connected to David, distinctly connected to the פילגש/pilegeš and Ephraim. Interesting crossovers אֶפְרַתִּי /eprāṭī: gentilic; אֶפְרַתִּים /eprāṭīm (BL 562u): —1. from אֶפְרַתָּה /eprātā 2 = Bethlehem 1S 17₁₂, pl. Ru 1₂; —2. from אֶפְרַיִם /eprāyīm = Ephraimite Ju 12₅ (: Willeson VT 8:97f) 1S 1₁ 1K 11₂₆. †

iii. Qvc3fs זנָה/zānā “to be unfaithful” and alternately “to be angry” based on LXX (HALOT) are less than appropriately nuanced treatments of the term. This verb is used 95 times in the HB. However, it only appears two times in Deuteronomy and three times in the whole of Joshua through Kings. All three occasions in Josh-Kings are found in the Book of Judges and refer to the Israelites going after other deities not with reference to human sexual interactions. Exum translates the term here “to divorce,” noting that there was no biblical Hebrew term for divorce initiated by a woman.²³ This is at the heart of the what is described.

Throughout the HB, there are three terms translated as divorce is שָׁלַח/šālah “to send away,” גָּרַשׁ/gāraš “to drive out,” and כָּרַת "divorce." The first two reflect the less formal marriage arrangements of the tribal areas where one “takes a woman” and “sends her away”/“drives her out.” The third term is an Akk. loan word. It occurs four times in the HB (Deut 24:1, 3; Isa 50:1; and Jer 3:8), always with סֵפֶר “deed/certificate” and implies a formal declaration. It is significant

²³ Exum, *Fragmented Women*, 141.

in this context to note that the marriage between the Pilagshean is informal and her leaving him is thus described: she became independent/single of him and left, as a few verses below the Levite manipulates the Pilagshean and her father into believing he is offering a formal marriage by acting out the Mesopotamian Wedding Ceremony in vv. 3-4. In a time in which women and children were being sent away, the security of a formal Mesopotamian marriage was likely enticing to the father who may have feared the potential loss of his daughter's virginity (through birth of a child) would preclude her from future security.

iv. lit: the days of four new moons.

v. נרעה - female - probably young, occurs seventy-six times (forty-one of which are Deuteronomy and DtrH) in fifty-seven verses (twenty-six - Dtr(H)), used in twelve books of the HB, never in Chr. I am not sure what this means, but it is interesting.

vi. Qvqtl 3ms + sfx שמה "to rejoice" HALOT offers "he went joyfully to meet him"

vii. "Father-in-law": a man connected to an otherwise non-family member through a sexual relationship with a female, insinuates additional level of protection between otherwise unconnected males. An Akkadian loan word that is anachronistic to the pre-monarchic period of Israel.

viii. While the Levite self-identifies from Ephraim, PRDtr narration has already noted he is a נר/ refugee who resides there. This may be understood as using in-grouping language to endear himself to his potential host.

ix. Only time this בית יהוה appears in the Book of Judges. 1x in Deuteronomy (23:19); total of 72 vv in DtrH (7 in Deut-Sam), 65 in Kings, 231 all of HB

x. one of two times this word is used in the Book of Judges. The first time noted above was used by Jotham with regard to the Pilagshean woman who bore Abimelech.

xi. רצח - "specifically denotes the killing of a fellow countryman" (HALOT). A rare occurrence in the DtrH (appearing only eleven times, eight in Joshua, only here in the Book of Judges, and twice in Kings) The narrator makes a point to use a word that denotes the Pilagshean as being on the inside of Israel. Compared to the sixteen times הרג is used in the Book of Judges alone (used by the Levite to describe the intent of the Benjaminites in the following verse).

xii. הרג "to slay, kill." The author of this story makes a distinction concerning how the Levite sees

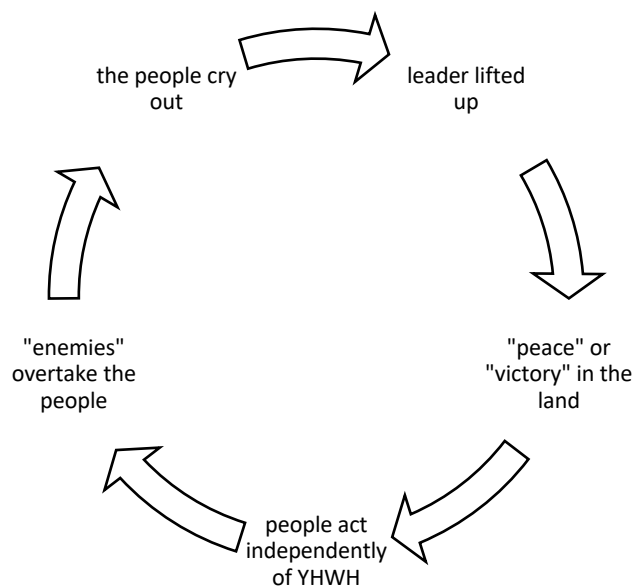
xiii. Cf v.19:24

Interpretation

Judges 19-21, the rape and avenging of the Pilagshean, is a text that is informed by the previous chapters and a text that informs the audience of what is to come. David M. Gunn notes, "like Micah's story [in the previous chapters of the Book of Judges], the events of Judges 19-21 are often set early in the judges period."²⁴ Placing the stories concerning the Levites at the end of the Book of Judges Dtr is pointed. While signifiers exist in the text that lead the reader to surmise that the tale is antiquated; its self-contained motifs, lack of "judge type" character, and introduction of Levites for the first time in the book point to it as a self-contained late appendix

²⁴ David M. Gunn, *Judges* (Oxford: Blackwell Pub, 2004), 244.

intended to redirect the reception of the Book of Judges. A commonly identified theme of the first sixteen chapters is succinctly described by Matthews, “in a tightly reasoned theodicy, the Deuteronomic editors of the Judges material lay out a clearly defined cycle of disobedience, divinely sanctioned oppression by neighboring peoples, divine redemption (rising up of a judge), and a return to disobedience.”²⁵



This cycle is sometimes read as a downward spiral in which each instance of the cycle shows a digression of society culminating in the near loss of the tribe of Benjamin. The only solution: to lift up a king over all Israel.²⁶ Yet, this cycle can be read as ending with Samson (and the Philistine genocide), with a new theme emerging in chapter 17.

Up to this point in the Book of Judges there have been no YHWHistic priests or temple/tabernacle centric cultic activity for said deity. The only king was Abimelech, discussed above, who was locally appointed (not divinely appointed) and whose tale was also a late addition to the text. The multivalent Levite text introduced in chapter 17 houses an empire

²⁵ Victor H. Matthews, “Judges,” in *Fortress Commentary on the Bible: Two Volume Set*. Edited by Gale A. Yee (Minneapolis MN: Fortress Press, 2016). Kindle Edition.

²⁶ This draws some scholars to the conclusion that Dtr was somewhat promonarchic, specifically in support of a Davidic dynast. Matthews, “Judges,” *Fortress Commentary*, Kindle Version. Cf. There are so many scholars who say this, name a few.

friendly message: “in those days there was no king in Israel...each man did what was right in his eyes.” And while every story prior to this suggests the dangers of monarchy and colonialization, this phrase (repeated four times with slight variation²⁷) subverts this understanding. In a slight of hand, the narrative is flipped. It is not the monarchy that is bad, it is life without a king that leads to destruction. Yet there is a hidden transcript in these last chapters piggy backed on the former chapters that highlighted the negative impact of the ruling tribes of Israel/Judah.²⁸ This subversive record offers a different spiral of regression – as the national polity moves away from the tribal system towards a centralized government and cult the women (an effigy of the whole nation) lose their independence, their names, their voices, their lives, and their bodily autonomy. Where the Pilagshean woman of Shechem introduced the plight of the indigenous population, this thread of the PRDtrH darkly turns the history of the region. If one could not trace their lineage to Levi, Benjamin, or Judah, then submission was the only option for survival. A point reiterated in the remaining threads. The position of this population is not ambiguous. What is on display here is the embedding of patriarchy as a tactic to silence portions of the population.²⁹

As noted above, there are repeated cycles and themes in the Book of Judges. These cycles and themes revolve around men, deity worship and battles, but there is also a framework for the

²⁷ The phrase in its entirety opens and closes the Levite chapters of Judges 17:6 and 21:25. However, only the first part of the phrase is stated in 18:1 and 19:1. This lack of accusation with regard to the two Levites is that every man except the Levites “did what was right in his own eyes,” leaving the Levites blameless in the view of the empire.

²⁸ James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

²⁹ According to Samson and Gigoux, the limiting of women's rights and visibility outside of the home is a deliberate tactic used by colonizers, *Indigenous Peoples*, 98-101. This tool is implemented by taking a rural and/or nomadic people and forcing them into an urban setting. This removes women from public space and pushes them into silence. This same silencing of women through “domestication” is recognized by Carol Meyers, though with different origins, “The Roots of Restriction: Women in Early Israel.” *BA* 41, no. 3 (1978). 91-103. <http://www.jstore.org/stable/3209454>.

whole the Book of Judges highlighted by the women.³⁰ As Schneider notes, “The use of women as a barometer of how the Israelites are faring is most obvious when the way the פִּלְגֶשֶׁת/*pilegesh* is treated is compared to Achsah...the two stand as book ends encompassing the text that leads the Israelites from the point of Achsah to that of a gang-raped woman.”³¹ Where there are six major male “judges” in chapters 1-16 in the opening of the Book of Judg: Achsah, a strong female character, was given in marriage as a battle reward; upon consummating the marriage, Achsah made a request of her husband Othniel, he did not comply; displeased with her husband she returned to her father, who gave her what she wanted (Judg 1:12-15).³² In the final story of the Book of Judges a nameless woman attempted to leave her husband and return to the house of her father; her husband eventually went to retrieve her (Judg 19:1-3). On the return trip she was gang raped (v. 25) and cut into pieces by her husband (v. 29). Her murder used as an excuse for civil war; the war ended with genocide and mass rape (19:30-21:25).

The events that follow have devastating consequences. The central character here, a Pilagshean woman, is unnamed. The audience receives some information concerning the character. She is a wife (of custom rather than contract), as is evidenced by the familial marital language applied to the woman, the Levite, and the woman’s father throughout the story.³³ She is

³⁰ Tammi J. Schneider, “Achsah and the Book of Judges,” an unpublished paper used with permission.

³¹ Schneider, *Judges*, 246.

³² It is inappropriate to assume that Achsah returned to her husband. The text does not report a return nor does Achsah appear in chapter 3, where Othniel’s time as judge over Israel is described.

³³ Engelken, “*Pilegesh*,” 550.

from Judah. She is not an adulteress or whore. It is questionable whether she and her husband have the same cultic practices. She is called an אִמָּה/’*āmā*.³⁴

The relationship between the two is clear. She is a wife and he is a husband.³⁵ In Judges 19:1 PRDtr gave the audience a tremendous amount of information on the Levite. While she does not disclose that the Levite had another wife, and there do not appear to be strict customs or laws dictating that a man must take a formal/legal wife before he could take an אִמָּה/’*āmā*. It is unclear if all of the ancient audience was aware that priests were not allowed to marry outside of the tribe of Levi (Lev 21:14).³⁶ However, it is highly likely that the elite readers (those moving from Babylon to Yehud) would have known that a priest was not to take for a wife of someone outside of the priestly tribe.³⁷ PRDtr has not identified this Levite as a priest, but she has just recounted a tale in which a Levite self-identified as a priest in the previous chapters.-This Levite could be understood as preserving the position of legal wife for a Levite woman in order to not preclude himself from the role of priest in the future.

In verse 2 PRDtr informs the audience that the Pilagshean woman neither accepts her marriage or the worship the deity of her Levite husband.³⁸ As with the case of the

³⁴ As noted above a woman may be both a wife and an אִמָּה/’*āmā*. An אִמָּה/’*āmā* may be a wife, but not all אִמָּה/’*āmā* are wives. To be clear, פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* does not mean concubine until the very late Persian, but more likely Hellenistic, Period.

³⁵ Judges 19:1-10, the Levite is called אִשָּׁה/’*išā* “her husband” (v. 3, cf. glossary “husband”), and הֹדֶתֶן/*hōtēn* in-law, relational language, for the men is used in vv. 4, 5, 7, and 9. The title “lord/master” is not applied until verse 27.

³⁶ Additionally, the priest is also not allowed to marry a זִנָּה/*zōnā*, which also has significance in this story.

³⁷ Jonathan Stökl, “The Making of a Priest: Priesthood in the Hebrew Bible and Other Ancient Near Eastern Texts,” Hebrew Bible / Old Testament Doctoral Colloquium (November 21, 2019).

³⁸ There is long standing issue with the literal translation, 'adultery,' the LXX translates זִנָּה/*zōnā* "she became angry" and several scholars follow this reading (cf. RSV, NEB, NLT, and NET to name a few). Klein notes, "a woman who behaves like a harlot should be stoned to death ... 'Prostitution' seems too strong a term for such a case were not the figurative meaning, 'spiritual whoredom' or 'idolatry' not also implicit," *The Triumph of Irony*, 163.

Gideon/Jerubbaal cycle, preserved here is a conversation regarding deity worship. The multivalence of זָנָה/*zānā* not only identifies the woman's choice to leave her husband,³⁹ it also underscores a question concerning her choice of deity worship. In the same way that accusations were thrown intext about *who* was to be worshipped there is a note of who is legitimately worshipping. The woman זָנָה/*zānā* acts independently of her husband. Within the Book of Judges זָנָה/*zānā* is used six times with the parsing here unique within the book;⁴⁰ however, this exact parsing is found in Hosea 1:2 in which Israel is described as being unfaithful to YHWH. Though PRDtr hinted to the audience that the woman was not being accused of sleeping with another man.⁴¹ Rather, she was unfaithful to the deity of the Levite; she left the question open for the Levite, who then answered it upon his visit to retrieve her from her father's house four months later;⁴² thus confirming this for to the audience. Finally, the audience was affirmed in believing her action as one of worship in the use of the phrase "house of her father."

This phrase is used several times throughout the Book of Judges, each time it carries the cultural meaning of tribe (6:15; 9:5 & 18; 11:2 & 7; 14:15 & 19). However, there is a greater cultural significance in the HB; "the house of the father" was not only tribal, but referred

Boling, *Judges*, 274 (as well as others to be addressed below) lean towards the idea that this is an accusation of female instigated separation rather than sexual, which may have been considered as bad.

³⁹ Exum, *Fragmented Women*, 141.

⁴⁰ Twice as a substantive participle: describing Jephthah's mother (11:1), and a woman Samson visited (16:1); three times as a finite verb describing the sons of Israel as chasing after other deities (2:17, 8:27: 8:33)

⁴¹ She was not made to act out the ordeal, nor was she stoned to death (Numb 5:11-31).

⁴² While some might presume that a lack of menstruation would be enough cause for a husband to make accusations of adultery, Berquist warns against applying the assumption that a woman would have a *regular* menstruation, as this linked to the health of the woman and her diet, *Family and Household in Ancient Israel*, Spring Semester 2018, Claremont School of Theology.

Schneider gives the explanation for the long delay in retrieving the woman as a sign that she was not pregnant, as a woman would be showing after four months of pregnancy, *Judges*, 251-253. And

symbolically to the fatherhood of the deity.⁴³ “Not surprisingly,” according to David Schloen, “the fatherhood of God was rarely invoked by the biblical prophets and many subsequent Jewish writers, intent as they were on the elevation of [the deity of Israel] to absolute supremacy through the desacralization of the mundane sphere, in opposition to traditional Canaanite religion.”⁴⁴ And, as if acting as a virtual highlighter, this phrase is distinctly absent from the opening of the Book of Judges when Achsah returns to her father.

Having addressed the accusations against the woman and understanding why the Levite would hesitate to take this Pilagshean woman as his legal wife, the audience must deal with how the Levite used custom and law to tempt her back in vv 3-10. Within the whole pericope the woman is called a אִשָּׁה/’iššâ and an אִמָּה/’āmâ. Though the laws and customs are not clear concerning the rights of the אִשָּׁה/’iššâ there are more clearly identifiable rules concerning the אִמָּה/’amāh. The marriage of a man to an אִמָּה/’āmâ is one of custom, not law. separation is done through verbing “to be sent out” or by the wife “leaving.” According to custom the אִמָּה/’āmâ was not asked her preference in staying with her husband (Gen 31). According to the law she could leave if her husband did not adequately supply for her needs (Exod 21:10). Though ancient readers of this text have attempted to claim that the Pilagshean woman left her husband in anger⁴⁵ (possibly allowing for the application of Exod 21:10) the actions of the characters do not support this interpretation.

The Pilagshean woman left without cause. The migrant audience knew the Levite would not sacrifice his potential priestly status to take the woman as his legal wife. PRDtr made no

⁴³ Schloen, *House*, 360.

⁴⁴ Schloen, *House*, 360. This will be discussed in more detail in chapter 6.

⁴⁵ Gunn, *Judges*, 244-245.

mistake in letting the postexilic audiences know the place of the woman in 19:19, she was an אִמָּה/ 'āmā, as was witnessed by the title given her by the Levite (Judg 19:19). We can also be assured that neither the father nor the woman felt that her treatment justified her leaving the Levite as prescribed in Exodus 21:10.

The Levite did not betray his true feelings towards his wife, he did not love her, they were not reconciled.⁴⁶ She legally belonged to him and he would do with her as he pleased. This spelled out in detail via their encounter with the men of Benjamin in which she is put out to be gang raped, his disregard for her the following morning, and his dismembering her as he would an animal (vv. 22-29). This cold treatment of the Pilagshean woman and her dismemberment was not a call for vengeance; rather, it was a warning to the indigenous people of Yehud. The Levite was doing this to ensure that the people knew their place. This becomes particularly pertinent as the war against the tribe of Benjamin leaves the virgins of Jabesh-Gilead and Shiloh without protection.⁴⁷ The events have led to a situation in which 600 women were put in forced marriages that they could not escape. They have seen what happens when a woman acted against customs and laws: she was gang raped and chopped to pieces.⁴⁸

RIZPAH, DAUGHTER OF AIAH (2 SAM. 3:7-11 AND 21:8-14)

⁴⁶ Contrary to popular non-evidence-based scholarship. Commentary that includes reconciliation see C.F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I & II Samuel*, Commentary on the Old Testament, 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1986), 443.

⁴⁷ Notice that there is not tribal affiliation noted. The people of the land are objects for use, just as the exiles were in Babylon.

The women of Jabesh-Gilead were forced to marry, these women had no protection as their fathers have been killed. Even if they wanted to leave their new “husbands” they could not (Judg 21:8-13). The women of Shiloh were given over in accordance with the rape laws of Ex 22 and Deut 22, as the men of Israel have agreed that the Benjaminites may take these women; the women cannot be let out of the marriage in accordance with law (Deut 22).

⁴⁸ What is described here was also a threat from YHWH in Ezekiel 23:25 for wives who leave their husbands. It was also an imperial conquest tactic. Gale A. Yee notes the parallels between YHWH’s pronouncement of the punishment of Oholibah in Ezekiel 23:25-27 and the conquering actions described by Ahurnasirpal which included cutting off arms, hands, noses, ears, and other extremities. *Poor Banished Children of Eve: Woman as Evil in the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003), 131.

Translation

3⁷And for Saul a Pilagshean and her name was Rizpah, descendantⁱ of Aiah. And he said to Abner, “why did you go into the Pilagshean of my father?”⁸And he was very angry concerning the word of Ish-Boshet. Abner said, “Am I the head of a dog of Judah? Today I did a kindness/acted loyal with the house of Saul, your father, to his brothers and to his friends and did not give you into the hand of David. Yet you enumerate against me today the sin of the woman?”⁹Thus, God will do for Abner and thus add to it, if, according to what YHWH swore to David except I did to him¹⁰ to transfer the kingdom from the house of Saul and to raise up David *to* the throne of Israel and over Judah, from Dan to Beer-Sheba. ¹¹And he was not able to return *to* Abner a word from his fearing him.

21⁸Then the king took the two sons of Rizpah, descendantⁱ of Aiah, who were born to Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth, and the five sons of Merabⁱⁱ, daughter of Saul who bore to Adrial son of Barzillai the Meholathite. ⁹He gave them in the hands of the Gibeonites and they displayed them with broken arms and legs (alt translated as hanged) on the mountain before YHWH and they felled seven together and they themselves were killed in the first days of the harvest, beginning the barley harvest. ¹⁰Rizpah, the descendantⁱ of Aiah, took the sackcloth and spread it out upon the rocky ground from beginning of harvest until water poured out upon them from the heavens and she did not give the birds of the heavens to rest upon them by day nor the beasts of the field *at* night. ¹¹It was revealed to David what Rizpah, descendantⁱ of Aiah (the Pilagshean of Saul), did. ¹² Then David went and took the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan, his son, from the lords of Jabesh Gilead who stole them from the open space of Beth-Shan (where the Philistines hanged them there) in the day the Philistines struck Saul dead in in Gilboa. ¹³And he brought up from there the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan, his son, and they gathered the bones of those who had been exposed with broken arms and legs. ¹⁴They buried the bones of Saul and the bones of Jonathan, his son, in the land of Benjamin, in Zelah, in the grave of Kish (his father). They did everything that the king commanded. God was pleaded with for the land after thus.

i. lit: daughter.

ii. Lit: Mical, however, BHS notes and issue concerning the childlessness of Michal (ref.) Two Hebrew manuscripts as well as multiple Greek, the Syriac, and Targum list Merab. cf. 1 Sam 18:19 in which Merab is noted to be the wife of Adriel.

Interpretation

There are two threads of the PRDtrH in 2 Sam. The first thread is concerning Rizpah. It is broken up into two sections: 2 Samuel 3:7-11 and 21:8-14. Rizpah was a Pilagshean and a descendant of an Edomite chieftain (cf. Gen 36:20-29). As was the case with Timna co-parent of

Eliphaz son of Esau (Gen 36:12; and sister of Rizpah's ancestor, 36:22) and the Pilagshean of Shechem in Judges 8, she was not identified as a wife. She was a mother of two potential heirs of Saul. In the same way that Abimelech was lifted up by the people, so too could her sons be sponsored by the population to reign Israel. Another theme cemented here in 2 Samuel 3:7 is reference to the possibility of a power grab through sex (Ezek 23; Gen 49; 2 Sam 15).

It is in this verse that Ish-boshet, king of Israel, accused Abner of having sex with Rizpah (possibly understood as adamantly denied by Abner, but it may also be read as deflection). However, PRDtr did not weigh in on the validity of the claim. Rather, the focus shifted to how the accusation backfired and Rizpah's womb remained untouched by the men via PRDtr's pen. The first pericope closed with Abner's rejection of Ish-boshet and support of David.⁴⁹ Seventeen chapters later, the audience was reminded: no matter how bad David and Saul (representing Judah and Benjamin), the indigenous population would not be permitted to rule themselves. In 2 Samuel 21: 8, 10, and 11 Rizpah's royal ancestry is noted. In the first instance she and her children were treated as more significant than Merab or her children. Rizpah was listed first and her children who are named, not Merab's. Jonathan and Ish-boshet were dead and Rizpah's sons would have been first in line, followed by Merab's children.

David delivered the seven remaining (potentially legitimate rulers) to the Gibeonites who killed them and displayed their remains. Michal/Merab was not mentioned again (though her children were). Rizpah with full royal title is noted repeatedly. She specifically drew attention through silent protest to the devastation caused by the ruling tribes.

⁴⁹ Ish-boshet was killed in 4:7; his accusation against Abner led to his own weakening and demise.

In the last mention of her name and title, PRDtr reminded the audience that she was Pilagshean, offering a bookend reminder that she was, though royalty, not Judean elite. Yet no matter how hard the point of her place in society was undermined the audience had witnessed her power. She was a bearer of legitimate heirs to the ruling elite, and even in silence she could not be ignored or dismissed. She held the power to persuade the king more so than the children of Saul. This thread ended with David bringing up the bones of Saul, Jonathan, and the seven children of Saul. The brutality of David in killing these children not only underscores his power over the people, but highlights his willingness to kill the women through childlessness, this foreshadows the treatment of the Pilagshean women of Jerusalem below.

THE PILAGSHEAN OF JERUSALEM (2 SAM 5:13-16; 15:16; 16:21-22; 19:6 AND 20:3)

Translation

5¹³And David took more Pilagshean and women from Jerusalem, after he went from Hebron; and more sons and daughters were born to David. ¹⁴And these are the names of those born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon, ¹⁵Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, ¹⁶Elishama, and Eliphelet.

15¹⁶Then the king went out and all his house after him. And the king left behind ten Pilagshean women to watch the house.

16²¹And Ahithophel said to Absalom, "Go to the Pilagsheans of your father, which he left to watch the house. And all of Israel will hear that you became odious to your father, and the hands of all who are with you will be strong." ²²And they pitched the tent on the roof for Absalom. And Absalom went into the Pilagsheans of his father, for the eyes of all of Israel.

19⁶⁽⁵⁾And Joab went to the king to the house and said, "Today you have shamed the faces of all of your servants, who have saved your life today, and the life of your sons and daughters, and the life of your wives, and the life of your Pilagsheans."ⁱ

20³And David went to his house in Jerusalem. And the king took the ten Pilagshean women, which he left behind to watch the house and he put them in a

house under guard. And he sustained them, but he did not go to them. They were to be bound until the day of death, living widowhood.ⁱⁱ

i. This is the only time in the HB this word occurs in this inflection and the only time in Samuel פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* occurs with a pronominal suffix. It occurs 11 times in the Book of Judges with a suffix. Of the 27/35 times it occurs in the HB it appears as a possession.

ii. Alt. a widowhood of living. LXX, Targum, and Vulgate all have this as a participle “living widowhood.”

Interpretation

The second PTDtrH in 2 Samuel concerns the Pilagshean of Jerusalem. Contrary to what is implied by the narrator’s use of the word “more” in 5:13a, this is the first mention of David taking Pilagsheans. No one in this group is named, nor is it clear if the children were produced by Pilagsheans or *women*. The text notes that David took women, not wives and in the verses that follow the children born to him in Jerusalem are named without mention of the mothers. This thread has five scenes: 1) the narrator describes the “taking” of Pilagsheans and women from Jerusalem (5:13), the newly concurred Jebusite city (5:7); 2) the leaving of ten Pilagshean women to watch the house (15:16); 3) the public rape of the Pilagshean women (16:21-22); 4) Joab’s speech, wherein he chastises David for mourning Absalom, the Pilagshean are mentioned last (19:6); and 5) in the last scene of this thread the ten Pilagshean women are put away under guard and left to die.

In the initial scene in 2 Samuel 5:13-15,⁵⁰ the audience is informed of David’s residence, his women, and his children, following the pattern of 2 Samuel 3:2-5. A notable difference is found in the separation of the women from the children in the latter text. The reader is introduced to the Pilagsheans of Jerusalem not necessarily as a group of women, but as a conquered group

⁵⁰ Noth identified these two lists of children as pre-DtrH composition, but late additions, *DtrH*, 55, 125 n. 11. cf. O’Brien, *A Reassessment*, 132 n. 7. Though not held universally; see Reinhard G. Kratz, *The Composition of the Narrative Books of the Old Testament*, John Bowden, trans. (New York: T & T Clark International, 2000/2005 trans), 314, 323 n. 20.

of people. The women noted are not wives but were likely booty of conquest⁵¹ (which is not the same as political marriage).⁵²

While David was described as taking לקח/lāqah the Pilagshean and women, there is a deliberate ambiguity here surrounding the position of the women as wives.⁵³ Within the DtrH the two words appear together nearly thirty times, but only about two thirds of the time is אשה/’iššā the object of לקח/lāqah. In three quarter of those situations the women are possessed; therefore, “wife/wives” is an appropriate translation. However, there are four instances in which the possessive is missing (Jud 14:3; 2 Sam 5:13; 2 Sam 20:3; and 1 Kgs 16:31), all cases in which the women came from questionable tribes/families and therefore may not have been considered acceptable as “wives.”⁵⁴

⁵¹ Cf. the explanation for Sisera’s delay, that he was getting “pussy” or “cunts” (Judg 5:30), Tammi Schneider, private conversation.

⁵² Andrew Hill suggests that at least some of the פילגשיים/pilagšîm and women David took in Jerusalem were Jebusite women. Citing George E. Mendenhall for support, Hill explains that the taking of Jerusalem was most likely a military coup. In order to keep the citizenry from rebelling he needed to marry daughters of powerful Jebusites; see “On David’s ‘Taking’ and ‘Leaving’ Concubines (2 Sam 5:13; 15:16), *JBL* 125, no. 1 (2006), 131. *ATLASerials, Religion Collection, EBSCOhost*.

⁵³ “To take” לקח/lāqah occurs in the HB nearly a thousand times. With fewer than a tenth of the occurrences being in a verse with אשה/’iššā. Only about half the time can the combination of these terms be definitely translated as “to take a wife” and that is due to the use of possessives such as ל+suffix and/or אשה/’iššā +pronominal suffix, not merely based on the combination of the verb with the noun. The expression “to sfx for woman” אשה/’iššā [suffix]ל occurs meaning wife with a variety of verbs. While לקח/lāqah is a significant verbal choice in the literature for wife making, it is only used about half the time.

Furthermore, there are about two dozen cases in which לקח/lāqah appears with אשה/’iššā as the subject without אשה/’iššā possession specifically stated. In these cases it is up to the interpreter to determine whether a spousal situation is described.

⁵⁴ This is consistent with the usage in Genesis. Throughout the Book of Genesis there were women who were אשה/’iššā [suffix/name]ל [verb] (Gen 11:29; 16:3; 21:21; 24:67; 28:1; 28:9; 41:45) and there were women who לקח אשה/lāqah ’iššā (Gen 25:1; 26:34; 36:2). Descendants of Terah, those from the east, and Egyptian women were the former, whereas women from anywhere else were the latter.

Not that a woman could not become a wife, rather there appears to be a distinction in intention. The significance of being a wife was the to have the benefit of having children as heirs to the man. A woman could be named a wife after the fact through actions of the man. As we will see below, this was the case of the Pilagshean women of Jerusalem.

Returning to David specifically, the exact phrase “and David took” דו(י)קח/*wāyiqqah dawid* occurs only ten times in the HB, seven times in Samuel (1 Sam 17:54; 25:35; 26:12; 30:20; 2 Sam 5:13; 8:1 and 7), and three in Chronicles (1 Chr 14:3; 18:7; 20:2). In arguably every instance of its use in Samuel it has to do with David as victorious or dominant, as is the case with two (but likely all three) in Chronicles. Curiously, the parallel text concerning David taking women in Jerusalem that occurred in 1 Chronicles (14:3), is pointedly missing פילגשים/*pīlagšīm*. “David took” דו(י)קח/*lāqah dawid* occurs thrice in the HB (1 Sam 16:23; 25:43; and 1 Chr 18:8).⁵⁵ Again, in each instance it can be argued that the taking had to do with conquest, even in the taking of women. We never find out if the women are Jebusite or Pilagshean, though we learn later that there were women chosen by David from the Pilagshean population, who would eventually become recognized as wives (cf. 2 Sam 12:11).

That the Pilagshean women here were likely slave women used for sex had more to do with how cities were captured than the use of the identifier פילגשים/*pīlagšīm*.⁵⁶ The assertion that they were child-bearing slaves⁵⁷ does not pan out with regard to how the term is used specifically in DtrH and more broadly across the HB, with the exception of Chronicles. The conquest of the Jebusite city, the taking of human booty, and the bearing of children here, foreshadows the Bathsheba incident in 2 Samuel 11-12 as well as the remainder of the scenes in this PTDtrH.

⁵⁵ 1 Sam 16:23 “And it came to pass, when the *evil* spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took the harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.” ASV

⁵⁶ Cf. Susan Niditch, “Wars, Women, and Defilement,” in Camp and Fontaine. *Women, War, and Metaphor*, 39-57.

⁵⁷ Hill suggests that the פילגשים/*pīlagšīm* were slave women, agreeing with P. Kyle McCarter, who defines concubine as “slave women who belonged to wealthy households and bore children but did not share all the legal privileges of wives,” Hill, “On ‘Taking’ and ‘Leaving,’” 132; P. Kyle, McCarter, *II Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes, and Commentary* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1984), 148.

Following the verse in which David took the Pilagshean and women, is a list of the children born to him while he was in Jerusalem (2 Sam 5:14-16). To presume the mothers of the sons were necessarily wives is to state something that the text does not. It is significant to underscore that none of the children are identified with their mothers in this list (contrasted to 2 Sam 3:1-3).⁵⁸ Only one of the named children, Solomon, was ever noted again in the DtrH,⁵⁹ though the others do pop up again in the parallel passage in Chronicles, where the mothers are still unidentified (1 Chr 14:3-7). Is this to say, the mothers do not matter? This is unlikely, rather, it is to say, the children, at this point have no inheritance. To list Solomon among these children acts as a bit of dark irony. The audience is very aware that Solomon's mother, taken while a neighbor's wife, became a full wife to David. And her son, initially named among non-inheritors, became David's successor. This is in sharp contrast to the remainder of the children who were never mentioned again and the Pilagshean women who were taken by a neighbor, would eventually be given a position of honor, yet became wives in title only. David had an established habit of taking women, having children with them, and making them wives after a tragedy (not always in this order). An example his sons appear to follow.

The remainder of the scenes in the Pilagshean of Jerusalem thread are in direct response to the events of 2 Samuel 11-12. Following the David and Bathsheba episode,⁶⁰ and after the

⁵⁸ A point of interest with regard to 2 Samuel 3:2-5 concerning the naming of the women in that list. Of all the women here, only three were identified as wives, Ahinoam, Abigail, and Eglah. While not identified as wives in 3:2-3, Ahinoam and Abigail were identified as wives by the Dtr earlier (1 Sam 25:40-43). None of the other women listed here, Maacah, Haggith, or Abital, are named wives here or anywhere else in the HB.

⁵⁹ While his mother, Bathsheba is not named here, she is identified later (only in the DtrH, not in Chronicles) as David's wife (2 Sam 12:24).

⁶⁰ In that tale, David took her (11:4), he had her husband killed (vv.14-21), she became his wife and bore a child (v.27) that did not survive (12:19). Hidden in this sequence of events the audience is given key information concerning David's house, specifically Absalom and the Pilagshean women. Nathan delivers this word from YHWH: "Misfortune will rise against you from your house, and I will take your wives before your eyes and I will give them to your neighbor, and he will lay with your wives before the eyes of this sun" 12:11.

incident between his first-born son Amnon (son of his third wife Ahinoam) and Tamar and Absalom, his children from Maacah (daughter of Talmai king in Geshur – never called David’s wife);⁶¹ David fled Jerusalem due to Absalom’s uprising.⁶²

In 2 Samuel 15:16 David gathered all of his house and went out of Jerusalem. He pointedly abandoned⁶³ ten Pilagshean women to watch the house.⁶⁴ Craig Morrison notes, “before David vacated his palace, the narrator focuses on a rather strange event involving ten concubines whom the king left behind to care for his house. This detail is framed [in the text] by the double notice that everyone else followed David out of the city... The peculiarity of David’s action... along with its narrative framing, suggests that it should not be overlooked.”⁶⁵ Placing the Pilagshean in the most dangerous position was not a new tool introduced here to the biblical text, it was also done by Jacob in Genesis (33:2). This was not an honorific action, rather it is more akin to sacrificing a pawn for the king in chess or pushing the infantry forward in battle.

⁶¹ Amnon arranged to be alone with Tamar and he raped her (13:1-14), Absalom arranged for Amnon to be killed (13:22-29), Absalom fled to his mother’s family (13:37-38).

In 2 Samuel 3:3, Absalom’s mother is called Maacah daughter of Talmai king of Geshur, but in 13:37 Talmai is the son of Ammihur (K)/Ammihur (Q). Geshur was a state neighboring Maacah, a small city. David is reported to have raided Geshurites, which would explain Absalom’s origins. It is significant to point out that *בת/bath*, “daughter,” does not always mean flesh and blood. Ljung points out that daughter can also refer to a city, in which case it is most often a negative connotation, *Silence and Suppression*, 39. While Ljung uses examples from outside of the narrative texts, it is on occasion used within the DtrH to mean city as well (cf. Josh 15:45 & 47).

⁶² After Absalom’s time in Geshur, David was convinced to bring him to Jerusalem (2 Sam 14:1-24). While there Absalom moved to become the king of Israel, with a large amount of popular support (2 Sam 15:1-6).

⁶³ The term used here is *עזב/’zb* has a cognate in Akk. *ezēbu* “to abandon a wife, husband, divorce,” (HALOT). It is also, not the same word used in 20:3 to describe David’s action after the fact, *נזח/nwch*, “to leave.”

⁶⁴ This abandonment is explained by Graeme Auld, “the king ‘abandons’ women, who are to ‘watch’ the house; these abandoned women should have some status in the house” (*I & II Samuel*, 507), which would be the case if Hill is correct that the women came from Jebusite families, Hill, “On ‘Taking’ and ‘Leaving’,” 131.

⁶⁵ Craig E. Morrison, *2 Samuel Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative & Poetry* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013) 205.

Here PRDtr used a series of parallels with the Pilagshean tale of Judges 19-20, to highlight the plight of the ten Pilagshean women. Both men are affiliated with tents.⁶⁶ A contrasting parallel is found in the case of the Judges 19:25 the Pilagshean was “made to go out” (אצ׳/yāṭa’), while in 2 Samuel 15:16 it is the king who “went out” (אצ׳/yāṭa’). A second parallel is found in the following scene, 16:21-22. In both reports the Pilagshean women were left to encounter the potentially dangerous enemy in order to save an elite man. Both cases resulted in public rape.

There is great speculation concerning the purpose of Ahitophel’s advice to Absalom, “Go to the Pilagsheans of your father, which he left to watch the house. And all of Israel will hear that you became odious to your father, and the hands of all who are with you will be strong” (v.21).⁶⁷ I propose, in a continuation of the parallels between Judges 19-21 and the Pilagshean of Jerusalem Thread addressed here, we not only have the public raping of women, but this action was specifically used to empower and insight the people in preparation for battle. Though there is no use of the word “abuse,” אָלַל/’ālal, PRDtr used other cues to let the audience know that this was in fact rape. In his advice to Absalom, Ahitophel told him “all of Israel will hear” what he was doing, bringing to mind the Deuteronomic law (Deut 22:22-24), wherein the consequence for consensual sex between a man and a women that belonged to another man was stoning, save

⁶⁶ The significance of the parallel increased due to the fact that Ezekiel 23 also uses tent language. Cf. Yee, *Poor Banished Children of Eve*, 124.

⁶⁷ McCarter explains the concept and gives several examples from within Samuel; he writes, “By claiming the royal harem Absalom publicizes his claim to the throne ... Compare, in this regard, Solomon’s reaction to Adonijah’s request for Abishag, the last woman to sleep in David’s bed (1 Kgs 2:22-34), and the possibility that David himself took over Saul’s harem” (*II Samuel*, 384; cf. Morrison, *2 Samuel*, 225). Steven Thatcher Mann notes that “...Ahitophel counsels Absalom on how to strengthen the confidence of those who are with him (16:20-22)” *Run, David, Run! An Investigation of the Theological Speech Acts of David’s Departure and Return (2 Samuel 14-20)* (Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 2013), 123. Morrison adds that the reappearance of the Pilagshean here “is to signal the success of the coup d’état to the people of Jerusalem, Absalom has sexual relations with them (16:21-22),” *2 Samuel*. 205.

if the woman were to cry out.⁶⁸ In Judges 19, the Levite took the Pilagshean, cut her into pieces and sent her out to all the tribes in order to incite war against the offenders (vv.29-30). This worked to such a degree that one tribe was almost completely lost to genocide (21:3).

The presence of the Pilagshean in this verse is a dog whistle. Here Joab accused David of shaming the men, who protected all that are important to him, by mourning for Absalom. Curious though that Pilagshean are among this list. These women were not protected; the reader still doesn't know what happened to them after the public rape. Rather than assuming that this was an editor's error this seems to be a reminder that these women were forgotten while the battle raged, just as the Pilagshean in Judges 19-20 was forgotten.⁶⁹ PRDtr does something curious here in the list, where in 2 Samuel 15:14-18 a list of people taken to safety included the servants were, the king's house, as were "all the people," but ten Pilagshean women were left in harm's way, as noted above, reflecting their status. However, here the Pilagsheans are in a place of honor. The characters were listed in order of importance from least to most: the servants, the children, the wives, and the Pilagsheans.

In the final sequence of the tale of the Pilagshean of Jerusalem (20:3), David made the ten Pilagshean women wives and killed them. When he entered his house in Jerusalem, he began the physical reversal of what he did when he left. Auld writes, "the task he has then set for the ten women (15:16) now sees a double reversal: 'guards' have been put under guard; women

⁶⁸ Again, the dark irony of the similarities between Bathsheba's experience and final fate and that of these women, should not be lost on the reader. And though slightly off topic for the purposes of this study, I would be amiss to not bring up that significant pieces of the prophecy from 2 Samuel 12:11 were fulfilled by Absalom's action. Misfortune rose up from within David's house in the persons of his sons, both having committed rape; a neighbor, Absalom the Gerushite and David's son, lie with the Pilagshean women David took from Jerusalem; and though they are not now identified as wives, the following two scenes will place them in that position.

⁶⁹ The Levite's פילגש/pilegeš was not mentioned again after Judges 20:6.

destined for sexual encounter (“concubines”) are ‘widowed.’”⁷⁰ To label these women “widows” אלמנות / *’almānūt*, is to label them wives, as one cannot be a widow if not a wife. In his action to put them away without ever going into them was a death sentence for a woman in the ancient world. And though he is credited with giving them sustenance, this could only be guaranteed so long as he lived. The irony of being named a wife, while never being touched by the king is truly tragic, as one of the largest benefits a wife had was that her children could inherit. If these women did have children by David before the incident, there was no promise that they would inherit (as noted above) and now that the women are recognized as wives, there is no possibility of them having children by David.⁷¹

This virtual death of the Pilagshean can be understood as the final parallel between this tale and that of the Pilagshean in Judges 19. In Judges 19-20 1) a man representing a centralized power structure abandoned his charge, 2) allowed her to be publicly raped, 3) possibly murdered her, 4) waged war over the outrage, 5) and forgot her. While the series of events described is altered slightly the parallel is clear in the adaptation: 1) a man representing a centralized power structure abandoned his charges, 2) allowed them to be publicly raped, 4) waged war over the outrage, 5) forgotten them for a period of time, 3) and finally killed them through celibacy.

Women in ancient Israel found their security in their husbands; when the husband died the woman had security through her children. If he died while she remained childless, she was allowed to remarry in order to produce offspring.⁷² However, David took that right to life away

⁷⁰ Auld, *I & II Samuel*, 561.

⁷¹ Of course, a major concern around the sequestering was so that there would be no question of paternity, Morrison, 2 *Samuel*, 266. But forced celibacy for that reason does not require the sentence “until death.”

⁷² Cf. Deut 25:5-10. Not so coincidentally, the term אלמנות / *’almānūt* only occurs three times in the HB. Here, Isaiah 54:4 and in the tale of Judah and Tamar in which David’s ancestor, Tamar removed her garments of widowhood, so that she could lie with Judah and live.

from these women. It is not clear whether or not the Pilagshean had children (and even if they did, it doesn't take long to think of the fate of Rizpah and Merab's children to know that having children of a king did not equal security, 2 Sam 21:8). Now they would surely not have children. Therefore, these women were sentenced to possible starvation in life (as there was no guarantee that they would be maintained after the death of David), and to die an eternal death (that is to die with no heirs).

THE THREE HUNDRED PILAGSHEANS (1 KINGS 11:3)⁷³

Translation

¹Now King Solomon loved many foreign women: a daughter of Pharaoh, Moabitesses, Amoritesses, Edomitesses, Hittitesses ²from the nations which YHWH said to the childrenⁱ of Israel, "Do not go into them and they will not come into you. Surely, they will divert your hearts after their gods." Solomon clung to them to love. ³There were his seven hundred, high ranking wives,ⁱⁱ and three hundred Pilagsheans. His wives diverted his heart. ⁴When Solomon was old, his wives diverted his heart after other gods, then his heart was not *at* peace with YHWH his god, like the heart of David his father. ⁵Solomon went after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom, the monsterⁱⁱⁱ of the Amorites. ⁶Solomon did the evil in the eyes of YHWH and he did not remain true after YHWH, like David his father. ⁷Then Solomon built a place of worship for Chemosh, the monster of Moab on the mountain which was before Jerusalem; and for Molek, the monster of the children of Ammon. ⁸Thus he did for all of his foreign wives, who were causing smoke to go up and sacrificing to their gods.

i. Children rather than sons because of relations described.

ii. Traditionally translated as princess.

iii. No great translation: idol, statue, monster. Traditionally "abomination." also verse 7.

The previous chapter ended with the narrator listing out the misdeeds of Solomon under the so-called "King's Law" (17:14-20). This chapter opens with additional accusations against

⁷³ In every other Pilagshean Thread I have chosen only to translate the verses that directly reference the Pilagshean and merely reference the surrounding verses. Here, however, I include the surrounding verses as the context and intra-textuality does in fact point to the Pilagsheans.

Solomon. On the surface one might read this to be a continuation of accusations against him concerning the “King’s Law,” and likely includes a nod to the more general command in Deuteronomy 7 against marrying the native population. While these are legitimate surface readings, there is an additional hidden transcript. There are key differences between Deuteronomy 7:3-4a; 17:17; and 1 Kings 11:1-8. In the “King’s Law” the king of Israel “should not make his wives great and turn his heart” and the Deuteronomic injunction (meant for all of Israel) commands: “you will not marry with them; you will not give your daughter to his son nor will you take his daughter for your son. For he will turn your son from following me and they will serve other gods...” (7:3-4a).⁷⁴ Yet here Dtr notes: “Solomon loved many foreign women....from the nations YHWH said to the children of Israel, ‘Do not go into them and they will not come into you. Surely, they will divert your hearts after their gods’” (11:1-2). This initial accusation includes Ezekiel’s critique concerning Jerusalem’s non-committal sex in Ezek16 and 23. The foreign women were not listed as wives in 1 Kings 11:1-2. They were merely listed as women he loved.

It is specifically noted that Solomon loved them – twice – creating an *inclusio* on verses 1-2. Solomon’s love is listed, followed by the provenance of the women, the supposed quote of YHWH’s injunction against בוא/bô’ “going/coming in,” and ending with the declaration of Solomon’s love for them. No marriage (either customary or legal) language exists in these first two verses. There is no possessive language referencing the women, nor do the verbs לקח/lāqah, היה/hāyâ, or נתן/nātan appear within the *inclusio*. Furthermore, the use of the two verbs together

⁷⁴ Note that both forms of marriage are listed here: the legal marriage: חתן/hātan “to marry,” and the customary marriage: לקח/lāqah, “to take,” and נתן/nātan “to give” [suffix]ל.

(particularly describing a sexual relationship) is not common.⁷⁵ Significantly it is used in Ezek16 wherein Jerusalem is said to be native to the land of the Canaanite (which was a dehumanic applied to the Edomites and Moabites), her parentage was Amorite and Hittite (v.3), and she was זָנָה/*zānā* “sexually active with, but not married to” the Egyptians (v.26), each listed in 1 Kings 11:2 as lovers of Solomon. The unfaithful actions of Jerusalem and Samaria described in chapter 16 are fully defined in chapter 23, wherein the lust is explained as a lust for power.⁷⁶ However, Jerusalem/Oholibah’s was described graphically carnal, the sex with Egypt was not about power as Samaria/Oholah’s was; rather it was without *justifiable* purpose. Where sex here symbolizes military power, Egypt (by the time of Ezekiel) was proved ineffectual compared to the Mesopotamians. Synchronically, Solomon’s relationships (described here) foreshadow the events that lead to the Babylonian exile.⁷⁷

The following verse, 1 Kings 11:3, does three things:

- 1) It confirms the comparative reading of the accusation with the Kings Law. Solomon has not only been intimate with the women, he has in fact married a lot of them; therefore, breaking the law “you will not multiply your wives,” (Deut 17:17).
- 2) It confirms the accusation that this is about power not “love” אָהַב/*’āhab* and “sex” בֹּזֵא/*bō’*. However, inaccurate that turns out to be in the future, especially concerning the Egyptians. For the wives were “high ranking women” שָׂרוֹת/*śārôt*.⁷⁸
- 3) It contrasts people with rank (the elite, i.e. those with genealogies) with those of no rank (the peasant/barbarians), the Pilagshean. Flipping Ezekiel 23, PRDtr used it as a defense of the Pilagshean (albeit self-deprecating), specifically when compared to the foreign wives.

⁷⁵ Cf. Gen 24:67; 29:30; and Ezek16:33.

⁷⁶ Yee, *Poor Banished Children*, 125.

⁷⁷ As Yee notes, “Basically racialized stud-muffins for Oholibah, the Egyptians can make only love, not war,” *Poor Banished Children*, 128.

⁷⁸ In the same way as the masculine שָׂר/*śār* mean “representative of the king,” “commander,” or “prince,” HALOT; שָׂרוֹת/*śārôt* (occurring only five times in the HB) can mean “high ranking,” “princess,” (HALOT) or “commander,” Schneider, *Judges*, 62.

For the sake of brevity, I will focus on number three in this list, as it directly addresses the Pilagshean, though the other items will be addressed in the following chapter. The appearance of פלגשים/*pīlagšîm* in both 1 Kings 11:3 and Ezekiel 23:20 is in parallel. A key point of Ezekiel in referring to the Egyptians as פלגשים/*pīlagšîm* “savages” was to dehumanize them and to highlight their ineffectiveness as political allies.

In Ezekiel 23 (the diachronic first written record of the dehumanic פלגשים/*pīlagšîm*), the prophet picks up his pornographic attack on Jerusalem/Oholibah and Samaria/Oholah. The accusation again: power has enticed, but as noted above, Jerusalem/Oholibah’s can expect no advantageous outcome from screwing Egyptians. And here is where the self-deprecating comparison plays out. In 1 Kings 11:1-8, of all that the Pilagsheans are not: bona fide, high ranking, powerful, in control of their own fate; and everything that they are: barbarians, property, well endowed – the Pilagshean were not the cause of Solomon’s turn from YHWH. PRDtr places that blame for Solomon’s turning from YHWH squarely on the foreign wives (v 3c, cf. v 8). As ineffectual as the פלגשים/*pīlagšîm* “savages” of Egypt were politically, the three hundred Pilagshean had no influence on Solomon’s cultic practices.

To underscore the point that it was elite foreign influence not the Pilagshean who was to blame for the fall of Israel and Judah verses 4-8 continue the parallels to Ezek16 and 23. The במה/*bimâ*, “high places” built in Ezek16:16 show up in 1 Kings 11:7. The “smoke offerings” קתר/*qātar* the foreign wives make to their gods in 1 Kings 11:8 act as both a pun and a contrasting parallel to the “incense” of YHWH’s that was given to the “images of men” קטרת/*qētōret* in Ezek16:18 and set on a table before men in 23:41.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ While one cannot help but notice the English content similarities concerning the descriptions of Milcom, Chemosh, and Molech compared to the “idols” in Ezek16:36. A survey of English translations of 1 Kgs 11:5 and 7 have שִׁקוּץ/*šiquṭ*, translated as “abomination” (KJV, NKJV, ESV, RSV, ASV, YLT, DBY, WEB) or

CONCLUSION

In reading the PRDtrH as a whole, intentional redactional layer previously missed parallels and themes stand out in addition to a complete story arch. PRDtr did not just clumsily inject characters, pericopes, and entire chapters into the DtrH with no purpose. She built in each character to already known and accepted stories using the same or similar language to blend them into the text, adding to it to create something new. The first appearance of a Pilagshean woman in the DtrH should be read as a polemic from the non-elite tribes concerning their own legitimacy as rulers in the region. A nameless woman in Shechem had a son who became a king. The tale of the Pilagshean wife from Judah created a bookend for the Book of Judges as well as pointed to the diminishing rights of those in the region who could not identify with a tribe of Israel. Where once upon a time in Israel, a woman could leave a husband who displeased her and return to her father's house, or a woman of no distinct tribal affiliation could remain unmarried and bear a king, the gang rape of the Pilagshean wife from Judah has violently removed both possibilities from the table.

“detestable/abhorrent idol/god” (NLT, NIV, CSB, NASB, NET). And the same versions of the Bible translate גלול/תועבותיך/*gillūlay tō ‘ābōtayikē* as “idols of [your] abominations” (KJV, ASV, YLT, DBY, WEB) or “abominable/detestable idols” (NKJV, NLT, NIV, ESV, CSB, NASB, NET, RSV) in Ezek16:36. The term תועבה/תֹּעֲבָה/*tō ‘ēbā*, appears throughout Ezek16 and both גלול/גִּלּוּל/*gillūl* and תועבה/תֹּעֲבָה/*tō ‘ēbā* are used in chapter 23 (though not in the same verse: תועבה/תֹּעֲבָה/*tō ‘ēbā* in v.36 and גלול/גִּלּוּל/*gillūl* in vv.37 - likely defining the תועבה/תֹּעֲבָה/*tō ‘ēbā* of v.36; 39; and 49) with strong sexual overtones, consistent with other priestly uses of the term (cf. Lev 18:22; 26; 27; 29; and 30). תועבה/תֹּעֲבָה/*tō ‘ēbā* is clearly the name of an action. As compared to שקץ/שִׁקּוץ/*šiquṭ* “abomination” of 1 Kgs 11, which is not attached to sex and names an object. Additionally, the שקץ/שִׁקּוץ/*šiquṭ* and תועבה/תֹּעֲבָה/*tō ‘ēbā* never appear in the same pericope with one another much less the same verse as parallels.

It is clear that 1 Kgs 11:1-8 and Ezek16 and 23 are concerned with kings of Israel seeking power through international relationships. Additionally, throughout the Bible, sexual language is used to describe deity/human relationships. In these three texts sex as a description of political allegiance and sex as a description of human deity relationships are bound and wound together. Wherein the similarities of subject matter are undeniable, it is not clear that the terms are parallels. I have chosen to translate שקץ/שִׁקּוץ/*šiquṭ* as monster (HALOT), to highlight the distinction.

With each new thread more was stripped from the Pilagshean. Rizpah, while permitted to have children of a king of Israel, possibly even an heir to the throne is proof that the elite of Judah were as bad as the empires who would later oppress them. Rizpah must exist in silence, her sons dead with no one to care for her in old age. This thread was intermingled with that of the Pilagshean of Jerusalem. Leaving Rizpah untouched PRDtr introduced the reader to the people David would not protect. The ten Pilagshean women of Jerusalem were left to guard David's house. Wherein Judges 19 a woman could be justifiably raped and killed for leaving a husband, here women were raped and put away to die, because a man left them.

This section exists in parallel and contrast to the Bathsheba incident. And the Bathsheba incident foreshadowed what was to befall the ten Pilagshean women of Jerusalem. Their rape, elevation to the position of wife and their tragic living widowhood, all prophesied as a result of David's having sex with a married woman. Not only did this point to the untrustworthiness of the Davidic line, it highlighted the hypocrisy. As the rulers introduced pressed and enforced strict sexual morals on the Pilagshean, they were not held to the same standards. And the Pilagshean could expect to be punished for the indiscretions of the elite.

The final PTDtrH in the DtrH is as short as the first. Their sole purpose in existing under Solomon, was to be possessed. The only thing left to cling to was the claim: Judean elite relationships with foreign high ranking women was the downfall of Jerusalem. Jerusalem would be taken by the Babylonians due to Judean elite attempting to gain political power through foreign relations. But this could not be blamed on the Pilagsheans. They were merely owned objects who had not sway over the king.

CHAPTER 6
READING THE DtrH PILAGSHEAN RIBBON
IN ITS POSTEXILIC CONTEXT

Introduction

DtrH scholarship has acknowledged and accepted the late addition of the PTDtrH since the inception of the theory.¹ Both the timeline of composition described in a previous chapter as well as the content of the threads within the DtrH offer evidence for a Persian Period dating of the Ribbon as a whole. These threads are multivalent in their meaning. They witness the struggle between the repatriating population and those who remained in the land during the exilic period. On the surface, these passages express support for the mid-enfranchised migrant community in order to disqualify and delegitimize opposition from the indigenous population concerning the migrant community's *right* to govern and oversee cultic activity. The indigenous response, hidden within the texts, rebuts the claimed rights of the migrant community by reciting the moral and spiritual corruption of those from the exiled tribes of Judah, Joseph, Benjamin, and Levi.

It is important to note that in both the imperial and the subversive readings of the PRDtrH, the ruling and elite tribes of Israel² are portrayed as incompetent and corrupt. From the Persian perspective this propaganda underscored the need for Persian rule. The Pilagshean perspective highlights how they participated in the formation of the United Kingdom as well as

¹ Though no DtrH scholar has addressed all פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* pericopes together for redactional discussion, each passage is notably described as a late addition on its own merits in broader discussions of the surrounding texts. Boling calls 8:31-32 a late redaction that is intended to act as a transition between Gideon Jerubbaal pericopes, *Judges*, 162; Noth *DtrH*, 45 and 119 n. 20; Römer, *So-Called DtrH*, 138; Gerstenberger: *Judges* 17-21, 284.

² As in the previous chapter, Israel is used to describe the affiliated tribes as a whole. Northern Kingdom and Southern Kingdom will be used in place of Israel and Judah to avoid confusion.

their deity identification fealty. Every instance of their appearance in the DtrH exists to highlight the failings of the *elite* tribes in their struggle for power with an undercurrent of cultic critique.

As noted in chapter three, this appropriation and adaptation of the term impacted its use in later postexilic literature such as Esther and Song. In the imperial storyline the Pilagshean are portrayed as idolatrous. However, the hidden manuscript highlights the Pilagshean population as arguably YHWHstic.

In every instance, the PRDtrH interjects statements concerning the indigenous population into already existing traditions. In the case of the Pilagshean mother of Abimelech, PRDtr associates Abimelech with the indigenous people (understood as unfit to rule by the migrant population) and lays out accusations against them as Baal worshipers.³ The infamous case of the gang raped woman in Judges 19 warns the native population to remember their place in the postexilic political system.⁴ Meanwhile this text includes a subversive hidden transcript highlighting the questionable cultic fidelity of the Levite. Rizpah's thread continues to tie the Pilagshean to YHWH and the land, going so far as to note her "royal" lineage, while putting on full display the loss of direct power of the native population as the empire took greater control of the region. The thread of the Pilagshean of Jerusalem (their taking, abandonment, public rape, and denial of children) directly parallels the history of the people of the land under Persian rule from the first migration through the banishment of the "foreign wives" as described in Ezra-

³ Though the constant flipping of Gideon to Jerubbaal and the questionable etymology for the name Jerubbaal undermines the "cleanness" of the accusation of Baal worship lobbed at the people of Shechem. This imperial accusation is most poignant by the introduction of Jotham (a theophonic name symbolizing the YHWHism of the Southern Kingdom) who undermines Abimelech by calling his mother a "slave-wife" (אִמָּה/ 'āmā).

⁴ Chaps. 17-21 are an outlier as an entirely constructed late addition. Römer, *So-Called DtrH*, 138; Matthews, notes the that the final five chapters appear to be an addendum to the book, "Judges," Kindle Edition.

Nehemiah.⁵ The final appearance of the Pilagshean in the DtrH clearly blames the fall of nation on poor ruling, which included being intimately involved with foreign powers (paralleling Ezekiel's accusation in Ezekiel 23) and the resulting abandonment of YHWH.

What follows here is a second synchronic exegetical treatment of the text, but from the perspective of the postexilic communities. Here I will employ non-binary hermeneutics (a mixture of traditional biblical hermeneutics, new yet established methods of biblical exegesis, and the application of transdisciplinary theories and methods). Many of the following interpretive sections will include work that extends beyond the translated verses as the context surrounding the PRDtrH hints at discussions between the occupiers and the occupied concerning proper cultic practices and the right to rule by the various peoples represented in the text. It is in these in-text discussions/arguments/accusations that PRDtr finds support for her choice to include the Pilagshean voice. The undermining subversive accusation that the Babylonian Jewish population (descendants of the pre-exilic elite) were unfit rulers and that they practiced the cult improperly, is present in the texts surrounding the PRDtrH. This Ribbon makes clear that this is not an issue that popped up in the time of the divided kingdoms. Rather, it existed before there was a king in Israel⁶ and included the Northern Kingdom, the Priests, and the Southern Kingdom. The presence of the Pilagsheans in these texts acts as a dog whistle for the people of the land concerning those coming from Babylon, who claim authority.

⁵ I would argue that the lack of use of the term פִּלְגֶשֶׁת/*pīlegeš* in Ezra-Nehemiah was a deliberate choice to undermine any claim the indigenous population had to the land while identifying them as historically demonized peoples listed in Ezra 9:1 and Nehemiah 9:8.

⁶ In this chapter, Israel is used to describe the affiliated tribes as a whole. Northern Kingdom and Southern Kingdom will be used in place of Israel and Judah to avoid confusion.

In the Gideon/Jerubbaal cycle there are Baal/YHWH contradictions, and inheritance and dynasty questions of an offspring resulting from non-covenanted sex. Abimelech's rise and fall in Shechem undermines the Northern Kingdom. In the Levite episodes of Book of Judges, a lack of confidence in centralized religion is expressed. We again see concerns over deity fidelity with added questions concerning civilized vs barbarian worship. In the same way that Reuben was undermined, heirs of Saul and David are paralleled. The Saul dynasty/David conflict that surrounds and includes Rizpah addresses dynasty, the rights of locals to rule, and deals with the false assumption that unsanctioned sex is a means to power.⁷ Absalom's rebellion too brings into question dynasty and highlights unsanctioned sex as a means to power. The final PTDtrH leaves the audience with a simple contrast: Solomon had foreign wives and like his father had Pilagsheans; the wives led him to improper cultic practices.

In the second half of the chapter I will present a reading that directly addresses the people of Achaemenid Yehud. This is where the bulk of social scientific methodologies, postcolonial work, psychoanalytical work, and gender studies will be applied in the final reading of the passages as a whole, wherein I will offer a fresh look at the Pilagshean Ribbon as a whole in the second part of the chapter.

The Pilagshean of Shechem

The Gideon/Jerubbaal tale that precedes and Abimelech vs Jotham tale that follow the PRDtrH, when read as a whole, present arguments concerning deity worship and concerns of local polity. This is not the only time these types of texts have been uncovered. In the final

⁷ This is not an issue specific to the Pilagsheans. See also the taking of Bathsheba (2 Sam 11) and the forcing of Tamar (2 Sam 13).

chapters of Isaiah Berquist uncovered three voices, priestly immigrant, political immigrant, and native voice bound together in Isa 56-66.⁸ Here too we have a jumble of voices arguing over proper worship with accusations that the *other* is wrong. Prior to the inclusion of the Pilagshean portion of the Gideon/Jerubbaal tale, the undertones of the text revolved around the legitimacy of the Northern Kingdom,⁹ specifically with regard to cultic practices. In reading Judges 6-10 multiple traditions are revealed.¹⁰ These traditions claim Gideon/Jerubbaal for both Manasseh (Northern Kingdom) and Benjamin (Southern Kingdom). Beginning with his father, Joash, questions concerning which deity was preferred arise.¹¹ Jerubbaal is presented as a Baalist whose action to create a physical symbol of the defeat of Midian resulted in the people's deity independent worship in the Shechemite/Benjaminite city of Ophrah (8:27; 33).¹² The tales were

⁸ Berquist, *Persia's Shadow*, 73-79.

⁹ Butler, in his commentary *Judges*, notes the significance of the Gideon/Jerubbaal cycle and Abimelech's supposed role in the political struggle between the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, "Abimelech made enemies of the people of Shechem in whose territory Israel has strong ties and traditions. Abraham (Gen 12:6) and Jacob (Gen 33:18) worshipped there. Trouble first around when Shechem raped Leah's daughter Dinah and Israel's sons killed Shechem (Gen 34). Still Shechem was a sacred place for Jacob (Gen 35:4; compare to 37:12). Moses expected Israel to be able to worship near Shechem (Deut 11:29; 27:4). Even with no narrative of conquest there, Joshua took Israel to Shechem for covenant ceremonies (Josh 8:30-34::24) and made Shechem a Levitical city (Josh 20:7) and a city of refuge (Josh 21:21). There Joshua buried Joseph's bones (Josh 24:32), and there Gideon could find a concubine, have a son, and leave the woman to raise the son in Shechem (Jud 8:31). Thus, the city in Canaan with the closest ties to Israel in patriarchal and covenant tradition becomes the center of controversy in Israel's first attempt at dynastic leadership. Quite readily, Shechem could be the Israelite center that preserved the Gideon/Abimelech traditions. Shechem also later became the launching point for the northern tribes to repudiate Rehoboam and enthrone Jeroboam (1 Kgs 12). The southern tribes then assimilated the Shechem traditions and used them to show the dark side of the Shechem and Israel's dynastic tradition," 196. In affiliating the Pilagshean with Abimelech and the Northern Kingdom PRDtr could justifiably claim that the Pilagsheans were corruptors of sacred sites. However, it might also be said, that this inclusion cemented their position in the north in addition to the south.

¹⁰ Noth *DtrH*, 45 and 119 n.20.

Whether these were tales of two independent men or alternate tales of the same man is also an argument outside of the scope of this study.

¹¹ Schneider, *Judges*, 103.

¹² The Hebrew term זָנָה/*zānā*, translated as "independent," is used in this context to describe the actions of the people of Israel. For a complete discussion on the term see זָנָה/*zānā* in the glossary. In this instance to translate זָנָה/*zānā* as "to play the harlot" superimposes a level of moral judgement that does not appear in the text and is an

conflated through the application of a problematic etymology of the Jerubbaal in Judges 6:32.¹³ Both were credited with the defeat of Midian. With the introduction of the Pilagshean woman at the end of chapter 8, a new claim to rule was put forth. This is the Abimelech tale, injected at the end of Gideon/Jerubbaal's cycle.¹⁴ A person from a lower station/lesser tribe has a son who becomes king.¹⁵ This possessed person, from a specific geographical location, in a permitted childbearing (and therefore inheritance optional) relationship, produced a son who sought to rule Israel.¹⁶

The insertion of vv. 8:31 and 32 by PRDtr pointedly link Abimelech, and all he had come to represent, with the Pilagshean. Up to this point in the etymological history of פִּלְגֶשֶׁת/*pīlegeš* the word had consistently referred to people who could be possessed. The use of the term here falls in line with the priestly exilic and postexilic usages found in Genesis, where it consistently

anachronistic expression of Israelite religion prior to the late postexilic period. The appearances of זָנָה/*zānā* here and in Judges 19 are not coincidental.

¹³ Boling, *Judges*. He does offer interesting discussion of the theophoric etymology of Abimelech (163).

¹⁴ Noth, *DtrH*, 45.

¹⁵ While Gideon/Jerubbaal's lineage is mentioned twice in this tale (6:11 and 8:32), Joash, his father, is not associated with a specific tribe of Israel (though he is identified as "a man of Israel" v. 7:14). Rather, he is described as אָבִי הָעֶזְרִי/*ābī hā'ezrī* "my father, the helper." In the LXX this is translated as πατὴρ τοῦ Εσδρι/*patros tou Esdri* (father of the Ezri, 6:11 and 24, though the latter does not mention Joash) and transliterated as Αβιεσδρι/*Abiesdri* (a gentilic(?), 8:32). This phrase does not exist anywhere else in the HB. Gideon/Jerubbaal is affiliated to Benjamin through his place of residence. Abimelech is affiliated with both Benjamin and Joseph (elite/ruling tribes) through his father and mother's residencies. Identifying his mother as Pilagshean suggests an inability to directly link her as a descendant of Joseph; however, there is a precedence that correct location and cultic activity legitimize the child for inheritance purposes.

¹⁶ Schneider notes the ambiguity of surrounding the ethnic identity of the people of Shechem: "If the residents were Israelites then this is an internal battle of Israel...If they were not considered Israelites then Gideon/Jerubbaal may not have considered her a wife because she was not an Israelite." She concludes, "The status of Shechem is necessary to understanding the context, though the text does not provide the information.," *Judges*, 135; Butler, *Judges*, 196.

This hits at the root of the resistance argument or hidden transcript. The history of Shechem is contiguous to the history of Israel. Despite the many pre-monarchic biblical references (synchronically speaking), and its significance during the divided kingdom period, the reader is left to read into the text whether or not the people of Shechem should be included in the nation of Israel, cf. Schneider, *Judges*, 135;

suggested a permissible relationship between the decedents of Abraham and the Pilagshean, even to the point of inheritance rights for the children.

This argument is articulated in the final reference to the Pilagshean mother of Abimelech in 9:18, where Jotham refers to her as an אִמָּה/’*āmā*. This was part of the Babylonian Jewish polemic that undermined the Pilagshean’s position as a free agent and legitimate progenitor of a Yehudean ruler.¹⁷ This reclassifying the Pilagshean woman as אִמָּה/’*āmā* followed Jotham’s parable in which he refers to Abimelech as “bramble” (an un-cultivated and therefore uncivilized weed, which grows and exists below all other useful crops).¹⁸ It underscores the argument that the indigenous population is not fit to rule themselves.¹⁹ In the Book of Judges the Pilagshean woman of Judges 8 simply disappeared, as the nation moved toward monarchy and empire the native population not only lost their voice, ability to inherit the land, and right to rule themselves; as will be shown below, they were threatened with violence for stepping out of line in their second appearance in Judges (19 and 20).

The PRDtr makes clear her distaste for foreigners, foreign rulers, and foreign deities. This is parsed out in detail through the first sixteen chapters of Judges. Despite the statement in the first chapter, the land had not been cleansed and the Israelites did what was evil in the eyes of the deity by inter-marring with the inhabitants and worshipping their deities.²⁰

¹⁷ What is described here can be described by part of Samson and Gigoux’s definition for indigenous peoples. Namely, a description of “colonized conditions,” *Indigenous Peoples and Colonialism*, 36.

¹⁸ The olive, fig, and vine listed by Jotham are controlled and taxed by those in power. While Jotham refers to the people generically as trees (potentially wild/uncultivated), they are useful to the empire when harvested. Jotham’s accusation is that the proper ruler of the inhabitants of Yehud should be those who were cultivated and taxable.

¹⁹ The Pilagshean wife from the Levite in chapter 19 faces a similar reclassification.

²⁰ The “bad thing” is described in 2:11 and 3:7, though not in the following instances 3:12; 4:1; 6:1; 10:6; 13:1. Cf. Schneider, *Judges*, 30 n. 6.

As early as Judges 3 the deity was so provoked by the evil of Israel that the deity did not remove the pre-existing occupants from before the people; rather the foreign enemies were used to prove Israel (3:1). Though the deity used Canaan, Israelite individuals were continually raised up to overcome the foreigners, reiterating the deity's preference for Israel. Dtr made the point that Israel was not to be under foreign influence.

Pilagshean Wife from Judah

The social/economic extrinsic context of Judges 17-18 described by Yee²¹ can also be applied to the state of the elite during the exilic and post-exilic periods. There was indeed no king in Israel and indeed the people did what was right in their own eyes. To those who were not removed this both highlights the ability of the rural communities to reinstitute and continue their rural cultic practices as well as highlights the view that the elite priestly class, carried off to Babylon, had sold out and practiced idolatry. Additionally, upon their return this corrupt class of people manipulated those who had stayed in the land only to use them, and discard them (Judg 19-20).

Despite all the wrestling with and debate concerning the content of the story, the text is clear regarding the take-away: "In those days there was no king in Israel; each man did the right thing in his eyes" (21:25). Several views are offered concerning the meaning. The predominant twentieth-century interpretation of this statement (בַּיּוֹמִים הָהֵם אֵין מֶלֶךְ בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל / *bayyomîm hāhēm 'ên melekē bēyisrā'ēl*, "in those days there was no king in Israel," repeated four times in Judg 17:6, 18:1, 19:1, 21:25; אִישׁ הַיָּשָׁר בָּעֵינָיו יַעֲשֶׂה / *'iš hayyāšār bē'ênāyw ya 'āšeh*, "each one did the right

²¹ Gale A. Yee, "Ideological Criticism: Judges 17-21 and the Dismembered Body," *Judges & Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*. Second ed., Gale A. Yee ed. (Minneapolis.: Fortress Press, 2007), 149.

thing in his eyes,” repeated twice in Judg 17:6 and 21:25) is that it upholds the Deuteronomists’ view that a central religion is preferred and, though monarchy is not ideal, a Davidic dynasty is an acceptable monarchy. Schneider, not a proponent of the Documentary Hypothesis, writes, “The notion that when there is a king people do not do as they please but rather as the king pleases is inherent in that statement, thereby promoting the idea that kingship is preferred.”²² Berquist suggests that this trope was colonial propaganda, sponsored by the Persian government with the message that the people of Yehud cannot adequately govern themselves.²³ I argue that the PTDtrH in the Book of Judges acts as a warning against a centralized religion and government. The Book of Judges, a collection of narratives about the pre-monarchic period,²⁴ “in its final or near final form this writing was read in light of their own situation by the postexilic community of Yahweh.”²⁵

A threat and a warning, this text pointedly parallels Ezekiel 23, as a threat to the colonized people of Persian Period Yehud. A married woman left her husband, a Levite, to live as a single woman זָנָא/zānā (Judg 19:2) // Oholah and Oholibah “lived as sexually active single

²² Tammi J. Schneider, *Judges* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1996), 284. An idea I first heard from Dennis Horton, “Introduction to Old Testament,” Howard Payne University, Fall 2003; it was stated by Matthew Thomas, “Hebrew Bible Exegesis, Samuel,” Fuller Theological Seminary, Summer 2010; J. J. M. Roberts writes, the ancient promonarchists, viewed kingship as God’s gift that finally brought order to an irresponsibly chaotic society in which ‘every man did what was right in his own eyes.’” “In Defense of Monarchy: The Contribution of Israelite Kingship to Biblical Theology,” *Ancient Israelite Religion: Essays in Honor of Frank Moore Cross*, Eds. Patrick D. Miller, Jr., Paul D. Hanson, S. Dean McBride (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987).

²³ Jon L. Berquist, “Post Exilic Literature,” Lecture at Claremont Lincoln University, Disciples Seminary Conference Room, December 17, 2013.

²⁴ The early dating some of the stories in the Book of Judges, which were later arranged into what we now know as the Book of Judges, is supported by linguistic evidence (cf. Song of Deborah) and in the role the deity plays throughout. According to David L. Petersen, in pre-monarchic period literature the deity relates to other deities by defeating them through the conquest of their people on the ground in a geographical location; in the monarchic period and later the deity is concerned with cosmological control and is no longer limited to action among Israelites, “Northwest Semitic Religion: A study of relational structures,” *Ugarit-Forschungen* 9, edited by Kurt Bergerhof, Manfred Dietrich, and Oswald Loretz (Germany: Breklumer Druckerei Manfred Seigel, 1977), 243-248.

²⁵ Gerstenberger, *Israel in the Persian Period*, 283-284.

women” זָנָה/*zānā*²⁶ (Ezek 23:2-3; 5; 11; etc.). The Levite grabbed her and threw he out to the men and allowed her to be raped (Judg 19:25) // the deity would execute his power over them: Oholah would be raped (23:10), Oholibah would be delivered to those whom she hated and left naked and bare (23:28-29). The Levite then chopped the Pilagshean into pieces (Judg 19:29) [and killed her] // the deity set his jealousy against Oholibah so that she would be cut up and killed (23:25). Yee explains:

[B]y falling back on androcentric ideologies of male honor and shame, Ezekiel foregrounds sexual violence in this image. By becoming a byword among women, this brutal picture of executed judgment stands as a cautionary tale for ancient women who may be contemplating adulterous acts against their husbands (cf. 16:41). This abomination becomes even more explicit later in 23:48: “all women may take warning and not commit lewdness as you have done.”²⁷

By paralleling Judges 19 to the tale of Achsah and Ezekiel 23, PRDtr shines a spotlight on the plight of the indigenous population of Yehud. Where women once had been free to leave a husband that displeased them, this would no longer be the case. In a region where people had practiced religion according to passed down tradition, which could include other deities, this would no longer be the case. With the imperial installation of the Jerusalem temple and the enforcement of a centralized cult, the indigenous population lost bodily and religious autonomy.

The Pilagsheans of Jerusalem

²⁶ This word occurs 22 times in 15 verses in Ezekiel 23 alone. It is exceptionally clear that Ezekiel considered this behavior detestable, abhorrent, defiling, and polluting. Ezekiel seemed to think nothing was worse than for a woman to leave her husband and have sex with whomever she pleased. I refuse to accept the use of the terminology “whoredom,” “harlot,” or “adulterous” (which are morally loaded terms that do not describe the action in clear terms) simply because Ezekiel found the action disgusting. What he found disgusting was a woman’s autonomy. In a patriarchal society, there are few things more disgusting to a man than to not know who has been inside a woman. To use the definition “a sexually active single woman” for זָנָה/*zānā* can more clearly put the actions of the deity described further down in the chapter in perspective.

²⁷ Yee, *Poor Banished Children*, 126.

The Pilagsheans of Jerusalem play a specific role in the telling of the story of the indigenous population. While each thread of the PRDtrH up to this point has covertly undermined the so-called elite Jews (those who could identify their ancestry with an Israelite tribe and therefore be counted as legitimate inhabitants of the Yehud – this specifically means the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, or Levi). This PTDtrH traces the entire history of Persian colonialization.

The people who identified as Pilagshean, half-human, hid their story in its entirety here. Just as David took Jerusalem from the indigenous population (2 Sam 5:6), his self-identified descendants had taken Jerusalem (and all of Yehud). As David took the peasants and the women (v.13), his self-identified descendants had taken the people and the women. The accusation of abandonment (15:16) is more difficult to pinpoint a direct Persian Period parallel, as there is little extra-biblical epigraphic evidence from Yehud at the time. However, the withdrawal of support Yehud experienced under Xerxes and the subsequent shrinkage of the borders under Artaxerxes leaving “areas such as Yehud susceptible to influence and coercion from non-Persian sources and also venerable to the Persian desire to hold its remaining frontier,”²⁸ is a strong possible parallel. While Absalom’s taking of Jerusalem and the Pilagshean women (16:21) may have been pointing to the period of time under Artaxerxes when “Yehud found itself in the center of three great eastern Mediterranean powers vying for control.”²⁹ David’s return symbolized (20:3) the placement of Nehemiah as governor of Jerusalem, and his putting away of the ten Pilagshean women raped by Absalom is easily recognizable in the sending away of the “foreign women” in Ezra 10:3.

²⁸ Berquist, *Persia’s Shadow*, 107-108.

²⁹ Berquist, *Persia’s Shadow*, 108.

Rizpah

Also in conversation with Ezekiel 23, as nearly all of the PRDtr threads are, the tale of Rizpah's protest points out just who exactly the indigenous population had to fear. In Ezekiel 23, the deity was quoted saying that those who were once lovers, would go against Oholah and Oholibah. In verse 25e Ezekiel wrote: "they will take your sons and daughters." Here in 2 Sam 21:8-10, it is David, the man whom Michal loved,³⁰ that took the descendants of Saul and delivered them to be killed. The indigenous population was given yet another threat. This was not only about sexual and deity fidelity, this included political fidelity. Those who did not obey, who did not support the Persian sanctioned rulers, would be delivered to be killed and their bodies would be left out to be ravaged by beasts. A stern threat from the empire, and a warning from within concerning the descendants of David. The only resistance option left for the indigenous population was what Scott refers to as "conformity and partial transcript."³¹

Neither Rizpah nor Merab/Michal was described as going against David's decision to hand their sons over to the Gibeonites (2 Sam 21:8-9). Rizpah did not take the bodies and bury them. Rather, Rizpah on the surface, *conformed* to the decision of David. Her open statement to keep the animals from devouring the descendants of Saul, belied the "full transcript." Rizpah did not feel that she could ask David to bury her children and the other descendants of Saul. As Scott describes of the Sedaka villagers, those in a weaker social position do not get to speak openly

³⁰ Though it is easy to say, the scribe made an error, obviously the woman mentioned in 2 Samuel 21:8 is Merab. Michal is reported to have not had children (2 Sam 6:23) and Merab was the wife of Adriel (1 Sam 18:19), but Michal loved David (v.20). By using Michal here instead of Merab, PRDtr brings to mind the comparison with Ezekiel 23 wherein the deity says, "I will start to work the ones you love against you...they will take your sons..." (22 and 25e)

³¹ Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*, 284.

about their views, “it has in fact been necessary to talk to the poor alone or in small groups...Only then does one encounter that part of the full transcript that would that would, if openly declared in other contexts, jeopardize their livelihood.”³²

Just as Emma Gonzalez’s public silent protest brought a nation to a place of self-reflection, so Rizpah’s silence brought David to self-reflect for a moment. However, the silence only works for a moment before those in power return to their destructive and exploitative ways. Or as was the case with David, the powerful (gentler with age – or decrease in testosterone) are presumed to be emasculated rather than mature. The lessons lost in misogyny and toxic masculinity. And the young immolate the posturing of power of a youthful king and not the wisdom gained by a more introspective one.

In this same way, the reigns of Cyrus and Cambyses led to repatriation, but those who followed merely emulated the programs of Cyrus’ and Cambyses’ predecessors. Leading to those in Ezra/Nehemiah’s time to discriminate and dominate.

The Last Pilagsheans

First Kings 11:1-8 was the swan song of the Pilagsheans. Each of the accusations in this thread were intended to undermine the Southern Kingdom, the Northern Kingdom, and the entire house of Terah. By this point, it was clear to the descendants of those who were not taken into exile (i.e. the indigenous population). They would not get to remain in the land. The native population of Achaemenid controlled Yehud had come to terms with the fact that they could not support their claim to the land in a manner sufficient for the Babylonian Jewish population to

³² Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*, 284.

accept. They had included their stories with the history, given examples of their connections to the elite from the origin of the Israel as a nation, and contrasted their righteousness ancestors (rewarded by their remaining in the land during the exiles) with the wicked ancestors of the elite priests and kings (punished by being taken into exile). Yet they had no *reliable* record of their ancestry, which precluded them from citizenship in Jerusalem as well as membership in the postexilic Jewish community.

Therefore, they rejected the whole system. It was no longer enough to say the descendants of the tribes of Joseph (Manasseh and Ephraim), Levi, Benjamin, and Judah were untrustworthy as rulers. If inclusion in the Jewish community, and therefore rightful inheritors of the land, meant being descendants of Mesopotamia, then the only thing left was to reject the system that rejected them. Bound into the text that surrounds the final reference to the Pilagshean in the DtrH is a sly reference to Isaac (the first descendant of Abraham to take a wife [Rebekah] from a descendant of Terah and therefore the east, Gen 24:67) and Jacob (last descendant of Abraham to take a wife [Rachel] from a descendant of Terah and therefore the east, Gen 29:30), likening them to Solomon and his foreign lovers along with Jerusalem as described in Ezekiel 16 and 23. Though this might seem insignificant or entirely coincidental. It is not. The worst thing that could be said of the non-Terahite women is that they were common.

Hagar, a wife of Abraham, was an אַמָּה/ *āmā*, “slave woman” from Egypt. She took a *wife* for her son, Ishmael, from the Egyptians.³³ Abrahams children from Keturah (not a wife) were identified in Genesis as פִּלְגִּשִׁים/ *pīlagšîm*, “barbarians.” Isaac’s wife, Rebekah, was taken from the east, a descendant of Terah of Ur. She was a trickster as was her favorite child, Jacob. Esau

³³ Curiously, of the foreign women in Genesis, Egyptian women are [suffix] לְאִשָּׁה/ *lāqah li’ššā* / [suffix].

married a descendant of Ishmael. His son Eliphaz had children with a פִּלְגֶּשׁ/pilegeš, “barbarian.” Jacob had four wives, two descendants of Terah and two with no genealogy. Jacob’s favorite wife stole her father’s household gods/teraphim and lied (Gen 31:30 and 34), descendants from both her children (Benjamin and Joseph) became kings of Israel. Though Leah was not loved by Jacob, she had a number of children by him including a royal tribe (Judah).

By contrasting “the high-ranking wives...who turned [Solomon’s] heart... his foreign wives, who were causing smoke to go up and sacrificing to their gods” (1 Kgs 11:3 and 8) to the Pilagshean, PRDtr offers a final counter point to Mesopotamian (and a lesser degree, Egyptian) supremacy.

Just as the Persians built temples for all the deities of the of all the peoples they ruled in hopes of gaining favor with those deities, so PRDtr accused Solomon of building places of worship for deities other than YHWH. Solomon representing the migrant Jewish community from Babylon. Throughout the entire PRDtrH the native population has repeatedly accused the descendants of Levi, Judah, Benjamin, and Joseph of idolatry, Ba’al worship, bad leadership, mistreatment of women, and sexual misconduct. Here all of the accusations come together, no longer applied to just those four tribes, but to all “pure” Mesopotamian descendants.

The most frightening parallel between Ezekiel’s tale of the non-committal women and the PRDtrH, becomes the message of the empire and the empire’s governors. Found in Ezekiel 16:35-43 and 23:25-26 are multiple torturous descriptions that were used against the Pilagsheans in the DtrH. These government sanctioned threats to the native population, became a reminder

from them regarding who truly was to blame for the exile, and a warning concerning who could not be trusted – namely the migrant community from Babylon.³⁴

Contextuality

The migration of the exiled leaders to Yehud brought about a conversation between the descendants of those who had been left behind, the poor and rural, and those who had once been in power, who were seeking to return to their ancestral positions throughout the Persian Period. The decree of Cyrus to have the local temples rebuilt, Darius' implementation of the nonmonarchic temple cult that would serve the empire, and the strategic placement of Achaemenid controlled immigrant leaders like Joshua and Zerubbabel left Yehud ripe for such a discussion. The voices of the repatriates were preserved in Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai and Zechariah, yet very little of the native opposition is preserved in the biblical text.³⁵ As noted above it was preserved in Isa 55-66 and the Book of Judges. Berquist writes that the centralized temple cult under Darius “developed its own control over the preservation and recording of religious traditions,” which these arguing factions were able to use to “establish and prove viewpoints.”³⁶

PRDtr possessed knowledge of the Torah as apparent by the use of the tales of Genesis and the laws of Leviticus, Numb, and Duet. She used this knowledge in her argument against centralized religious and political power. This argument was introduced with the Pilagshean from Shechem, was escalated by the gang rape in Judges 19, climaxed with the public rape of the

³⁴ Cf. Yee, *Poor Banished Children*, 126 and 131.

³⁵ There was also a group of disenfranchised priests, who returned from rural work in exile and were less keen on a centralized religion. Cf. Berquist, *Persia's Shadow*, 27-29, 74, 80, and 81.

³⁶ Berquist, *Persia's Shadow*, 81.

ten Pilagshean women by Absalom, with the tragic resolution in their sentencing to living widowhood and the burial of Rizpah's children. The close of the PRDtrH comes with the resolute and faithful presence of the last Pilagshean in the DtrH – the Pilagshean of Solomon's household.

Polemic against Centralized Religion

In this section I will describe the devices used by PRDtr to show ze/their distrust of a centralized religion, which is epitomized by the priests of the tribe of Levi. Movement through the book highlights the devolution of the people of Israel through their sins and infighting. This devolution parallels the evolution of communication between Israel and the deity. It also parallels the movement from judges to holy men, with Samson as both a judge and holy man, culminating in the appearance of the Levites.

The first appearance of the Pilagshean in the DtrH is connected to Gideon/Jerubbaal cycle. In these tales, issues of appropriate religion are also brought to light, as there are accusations concerning the deity worship of the *other*.³⁷ As the arranger takes the audience through the Book of Judges she shows Israel as a community in direct communication with the deity, by the end of the Book of Judges Israel is a collective of individuals and the deity is an object. When the book opens the people speak directly to the deity. In chapters 2-13 the deity

³⁷ A full exegetical treatment of the Gideon/Jerubbaal tale is outside the purview of this study. Yet it is significant to this study to note the immediate context of verses under examination. I will not take the time here to unwind the layers of north/south claims and accusations. Suffice it to say, Dtr villainized the north and local independent governance. This is done using in- and out-grouping language from deity worship to reclassifying the Pilagshean woman as an אִמָּה/ *āmā*.

speaks through messengers (divine and human).³⁸ Though the deity is treated as the object, direct object, indirect object, and as a descriptor throughout the book, the deity only speaks three times and acts once in chapter 20.³⁹

At the time that the Book of Judges was arranged there was an argument regarding who was allowed to communicate with the divine between the natives, who were more concerned with practical issues of social justice, and the immigrant priests, who supported a centralized religion. Both groups were concerned with ritual, but the priests were concerned with sacrifice and obedience to the law. According to the arranger, the priests were untrustworthy. In Judges 17-20, the priests, alluded to by their tribal affiliation Levite, were not painted in a good light. Micah's Levite (17-18), was a thinly veiled commentary on the immigrant priests. The immigrant priests were taken away to Babylon and most likely performed services in the temples there; just as Micah's Levite performed priestly duties for foreigners and was then enticed back to Israel, the immigrant priests were following the money.⁴⁰

In Judges 19-20 PRDtr also put on full display the discussion between local religion and religion of the empire via interactions and terminology used to describe the father of the Pilagshean wife. As was the case with Abimelech and Jotham, here again a word is put down concerning which groups were cultically correct. PRDtr described the Levite as a foreigner and *barbarian*. He was called a גֵּר/*ger* and lived in a tent. The father character was set up as a multivalent character who can be understood as a father of a woman who is displeased with her

³⁸ Messenger: 2:1 & 4; 5:23; 6:11, 12, & 20-22; 13:3, 6, 9, & 15-21; Prophet: 6:8. Point of interest: when the text noted that the angel of the deity no longer appeared to Manoah or his wife, it was the last appearance of an angel in Judges.

³⁹ The deity replies to Israel's questions 20:18, 23, & 28; and smote Benjamin 20:35.

⁴⁰ Berquist, *Persia's Shadow*, 74, 78, and 81.

husband (paralleling Achsah and Caleb in Judg 1) and also as a representative for the local deity. As noted above, the phrase the “house of her father,” was a way to refer to the tribal religious space signifying her abandonment of the religion of her husband, using the same term that had previously been used in Judges to accuse the Israelites of turning from YHWH.

While Dtr does not comment a tremendous amount on cultic practices specifically (particularly when compared to the laws laid out for religious duties in Lev), she does regularly imply that there is a right deity and a right way to worship.

Bound up in the Pilagshean woman’s return to “the house of her father” is an attack on the Levites religion and questions concerning his place in *civilized society*. Key comparisons such as using the verb גֹּר/gûr (“sojourning,” “dwelling as a refugee”) concerning the Levite; refereeing to the Levite’s dwelling as a tent and the father’s dwelling as a house; noting that the Pilagshean is from Judah, while the Levite resides in Ephraim (caring with the loading understanding of “hill people” and to represent the idolatrous Northern Kingdom); and the father’s daily pressure for the Levite to remain in his house all work to undermine the Levite to the Persian Period audience. While גֹּר/gûr may have evoked empathy from the Babylonian Jewish migrant population (bringing to mind Abraham Gen 12:10, Jacob 32:4, and the Exod, Lev 19:24); it would have brought to mind the foreignness of the Levite. Pointing out the lack of *civilized* housing would have undermined the Levites authority. The full accusation from PRDtr can be summarized: *Levites represent “civilized” Babylon/Persia, but they are refugee, “hill people,” who live in tents. Pilagshean are more civilized having come from the proper geographical location, Judah, and dwelling in houses.*⁴¹

⁴¹ Scott discusses the semiotics of civilized vs barbarian which includes being stationary, *Against the Grain*, 7.

These in/out group distinctions are the result of a fear of death response. TMT is a coping mechanism that is used to draw clear boundaries to distinguish who is on the inside vs who is on the outside for the purpose of self-preservation.⁴² The indigenous people, those who remained in the land during the exile, saw not only their way of life at risk, but their livelihoods, and lives being threatened. While genealogies (a strong out grouping tactic employed by the migrant population) do not appear in text for the indigenous peoples, deity-fealty is consistently mentioned. Whether, the indigenous peoples initially held strong henotheistic views or these developed as a polemic against the encroaching migrant community is not stated. Nor are there accusations beyond *not that deity* and *not only in one place*. These Pilagsheans, “half people,” have had the threats elaborately and repeatedly spelled out for them: the Levite in Judges 19-20 uses his intimate knowledge of the law to take advantage of a woman, imprison her, murder her, and cut her into pieces, which exists as the example for the migrating Babylonian Jewish population to do the same to the indigenous population of Yehud.

Polemic against Centralized/Foreign Government

As was the case prior to the exile, the inhabitants of Yehud gave little attention to the centralized government. These were the least significant people in the empire. Therefore, there was no attempt “to reconstitute the social life from Jerusalem’s monarchical, pre-exilic period,” as Persia demanded little change.⁴³ As noted above, the remnant were the poor and peasant class, as were the first repatriates (being from the lowest social positions in Babylon). By the time of

⁴² Isabelle Goncalves Portelinha, Jean-François Verliac, Thierry Meyer, and Paul Hutchison, “Terror Management and Biculturalism: When the Salience of Cultural Duality Affects Worldview Defense in the Face of Death,” *European Psychologist* 17, no. 3 (2012): 237 doi:10.1027/1016-9040/a000111.

⁴³ Berquist, *Persia’s Shadow*, 28.

the reign of Darius the immigrant population found more benefit (survival and political advancement) in supporting a centralized Achaemenid government including those leaders that Persia placed. In the biblical account this was Zerubbabel and Joshua (representing the Davidic dynasty and the priestly class). However, the indigenous populations concerns revolved around ethics and social justice.⁴⁴ This shift in focus from the original repatriates to those of Ezra/Nehemiah's time created a divide between the migrant and native populations, as the migrants desired to regain the power and prestige of their ancestors through allying themselves with the Achaemenid Empire. The indigenous people desired to maintain the non-centralized system that existed prior to this point.

Beginning with the first *argument as resistance* in the PRDtrH (Judg 6-8:29, the Gideon/Jerubbaal cycle), PRDtr included several key elements of what is now understood as the globally accepted definition for indigenous peoples; these are reiterated throughout the entire ribbon. In highlighting the lesser status of Pilagsheans we recognize "the non-dominant status of the people." The choice to resist through narrative and the resistance in text was represented by the Pilagshean woman from Shechem's son, Abimelech, who sought and was lifted up to rule; the Pilagshean of Judah, who left her husband; and Rizpah, descendant of Aiah. Through these characters we see "self-determination." Identifying the groups of Pilagsheans in both David's and Solomon's houses should be understood as "self-identification." The placement of PRDtrH within and including *arguments as resistance* marks "the intention of preserving indigenous ethnic identity."⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Berquist, *Persia's Shadow*, 51-81.

⁴⁵ Samson and Gigoux, *Indigenous Peoples and Colonialism*, 36.

The PRDtrH can also be understood through the lens of entitvity. The Gideon/Jerubbaal cycle has accusations and claims that in one sentence distance while at the same time create rules regarding who is “in.” This is the case for each thread of the ribbon. The arguments in the text were shadows of the arguments on the ground concerning who belonged in Yehud, who should rule the region, and who was a true YHWHist. It is possible that this record of antagonism between Abimelech and Jotham is an allusion to Ezra 4:1-6 concerning the difficulties faced by Zerubbabel during the construction of the temple. While outside the scope of this study, the parallels should be noted. Though he does not address any of the PTDtrH, Person suggests that postexilic redactions of several of the books of the DtrH were likely done during the governance of Zerubbabel.⁴⁶ The accusation the child of a Pilagshean, Abimelech, is a mass murder would act as a warning to others migrating from Babylon to stay clear of the indigenous people in Yehud.

Within the final chapters of Judges dissonant ideas were included. There was a systemic bias against *uncivilized*, those who were in the land and not under government control. As Matthews points out, this is found as far back as “the fourteenth century BCE Egyptian El Amarna tablets that describe Canaan as filled with lawless men (‘apiru) and political opportunists.”⁴⁷ Yet there was extreme distrust for the government sanctioned religious leaders. PRDtr appears to be caught between supporting self-governance and religious autonomy and fighting the internalized view of those in the land as barbarians.

⁴⁶ Person, *The Deuteronomistic School*, 58.

⁴⁷ Matthews, “Judges,” *Fortress Commentary*, Kindle Edition. Cf. Miles work on savages and the comparisons between the biblical treatment of Edomites to Native Americans, *Constructing the Other*, 77-135.

However, that is not to say that PRDtr is pro-monarchy. J. J. M. Roberts claims “the monarchy as an essentially alien development in Israelite history,” and sees it “as the progressive paganization of Israel.”⁴⁸ While this is an overstatement, I also do not see PRDtr as pro-monarchy. Saul, the first king of Israel is from the tribe of Benjamin, a tribe that is not held in the highest regard in the Book of Judges. David, the king who replaced Saul, was from the tribe of Judah, also not held in high regard in Judges. There are several examples of the Benjamin/Judah/Saul/David polemic in the Book of Judges with Judah appearing to come out on top.⁴⁹

The final chapters of Judges is a sample of how the PRDtr actively undermined the migrant population (specifically those claiming to be from the tribes of Benjamin, Judah, and Levi). Though Judah was held up as a leader by the deity in the opening and closing chapters of Judges (1:2; 20:18),⁵⁰ neither case shows Judah in a positive light. In chapter 1 Judah is promised victory by the deity, but “displays partisanship with his brother tribe Simeon.”⁵¹ In chapter 20, after the elders decided to go to war and the deity is addressed for the first time in the story, Barry G. Webb notes, “in contrast to 1:2 there is no promise of victory, and [the deity’s] response is terse...Judah first.”⁵² This should not be mistaken as support for Judah or the Davidic

⁴⁸ Roberts summarizes the “common” views held by his contemporary scholars, “In Defense of Monarchy,” 377.

⁴⁹ Cf. Judg 3:15-29, Schneider, *Judges*, 48; and Judg 19-21, Benjamin, the rapist and Judah, the first tribe called to fight against Benjamin. This last is particularly ironic, considering the parallel passage in 2 Samuel has David mourning the rapist of the Pilagsheans.

⁵⁰ Schneider, *Judges*, 4.

⁵¹ Schneider notes that it is difficult “to determine if this is a judgmental critique of Judah, or simply a depiction of the perceived historical situation,” *Judges*, 4. However, in light of its parallel with the end of the book, I believe this is showing that Judah (and therefore, David) is not exempt from degradation of Israelite society.

⁵² Barry G. Webb, *The Book of Judges* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2012), 482. However,

monarchy nor should it be understood as revenge from the tribe of Judah on behalf of the Pilagshean woman.⁵³ While vengeance was undoubtedly a motivator (vengeance for the Levite concerning the *betrayal* of the Pilagshean)⁵⁴ this was also a warning to the indigenous population concerning the migrating priests. A warning for the postexilic population concerning the repatriating Babylonian Jewish population was shrouded in an age-old argument concerning who should rule the region. Benjamin was not favored by the deity (or the arranger of Judges) to rule nor was Judah (Judah appeared as an undesirable option, if one must choose a ruling tribe); but the Levite was the most dangerous.

The distaste for a king shows up in the use of an eye motif as a framework for the Book of Judges. In chapters 3-16 Israel does what is evil in the eyes of the deity (communal action described in the negative), PRDtr added to this in chapters 17-21, where everyone does what is right in their own eyes (individual action described in the positive), with chapters 13-16 acting as the pivot with Samson (a symbol of Israel) doing what is right in his own eyes.⁵⁵ Though the eye motif is found throughout the Book of Judges, the phrase, “there was no king in Israel” only appears in the last four chapters. As the people moved further away from the deity as ruler, towards wanting self-rule, PRDtr introduced the phrase concerning the king.⁵⁶

⁵³ Some scholars suggest vengeance as the motive. Webb suggests it is Judah’s revenge, *Judges*, 482.

⁵⁴ Ambrose, as reported by Gunn, wrote, “in their desire to avenge the wrong done to modesty, for they would not endure the violation of chastity” there was civil war, *Judges*, 247-248. Unwittingly Ambrose points out the multivalence of the text. As Schneider points out, “the real issue at stake for the [Levite] man was that he had been threatened sexually, and yet that reason was obscured by the man in order to help, himself to achieve revenge.” A slighted man caused a civil war. Though Ambrose saw the “violation of chastity” as being done by Benjamin, the Levite felt the wrong was against him with the rape as his revenge and the call to battle his cover-up.

⁵⁵ Webb, *Judges*, 512.

⁵⁶ The eye motif symbolizes who was in charge. When the people did what was evil in the eyes of the deity, Dtr showed the audience that the deity was still the ruler. When the people move to doing what was right in their own eyes, Dtr showed the audience that the Israel was moving towards self-rule through a king.

The cognitive dissonance of PRDtr is nowhere more blatant than in her treatment of Judah. She obviously felt an affinity to Judah and the House of David, though the kinship is not clearly defined (the Pilagsheans identify as Jebusites, Judg 19 and 2 Sam 5). Is this ambiguous relationship with Judah and the House of David, a matter of the indigenous population attempting to choose the least awful ally coming out of Babylon?

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

The groundwork for the interpretation presented above was established a great length of time. The largest thumbprints in this work come from biblical scholars, linguists, social scientists, feminists, and post-colonialists. The terminology introduced above, such as dehumanic, mid-enfranchised, Pilagshean, and non-binary hermeneutics are monikers I have applied to already existing research. What I presented above only exists because of the work done by all those noted in the history of scholarship and in the discussion of methodologies.

The History of Biblical Scholarship, in chapter one, was broken down into three sections: on the scholastic treatment of פילגש/pīlegeš. I note three general types: those who deal with the passage in which the term is used, but not the term; those who offer a minute amount of discussion regarding the content and in some cases defend their choice of translation; and those who dug deeply into the word be it socially, linguistically, or intertextually.

Chapter two opened with familial concepts including inheritance. As inheritance in the HB was determined by procreation practices and the resulting offspring. This section was dedicated to the scholarship around Hebrew: אשה/iššâ, בעלה/ba ʾălâ, אמה/ʾāmâ, שפחה/šipḥâ, פילגש/pīlegeš, and זונה/zōnâ.

Additionally, chapter two discussed the methodology used in this dissertation. The methodologies used for this study include many traditional and new methodologies. While acknowledging my foundations in these hermeneutics, I introduce non-binary hermeneutics as the approach taken for this endeavor – not yet fully defined, and ironic if it ever were to become so. The key features are a strict reading/viewing, infused with the application of theories from multiple disciplines as natural for exegesis (regardless of topic), and the imperative to question

assumptions laid on the text that require a singular reading. Following the lead of Schneider in close readings (including word counting and grammatical analysis), I include etymological studies of ancient and contemporary words and the repercussions of assumptions around gender, class, and historical accuracy. Walking in the footsteps of Berquist's incorporation of several social scientific methodologies and constant desire to read the text through innovative approaches, I looked to scientific studies from psychology, geology, economics, and social sciences. Additionally, a great debt is owed to work in narratology, semiotics, meaning making, and folklore done across a variety of fields from biblical studies, to fine arts, and psychoanalysis.

Chapter three focused on the creation and development of פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš*. Key to the translation of the word throughout the HB is a recognition of its origins, appropriation, and adaptation. I argued that the word had been misunderstood for millennia due to the availability cascade. Wherein the use of פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* in Chronicles is simple and it is easily defined, it allowed readers to exert as little effort as possible in deciphering the remaining PTDtrH by simply using the definition found in Chronicles, which was greatly influenced by Herodotus' exoticizing treatment of Persian households. This resulted in an anchoring bias that cemented the term "concubine" as the translation for פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš*. Unfortunately, these biases do not lend themselves to close readings. When feminist scholars began to pull apart texts that dealt with women, the accepted translation was questioned.

Like any language, Hebrew changed over time. Words were adapted by members of the society to reflect their current situations in life. As פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* is not an exceptionally repeated word (occurring in 35 verses of the HB), its changes are slightly more difficult to perceive and follow, though not impossible. I proposed that Ezekiel's use of the term in the exilic period is the earliest record of it in the HB. It was created as a dehumanic with a rough translation of savage.

The term was picked up by the priests and included in the genealogies of Genesis with a meaning more akin to barbarian or peasant/local, with the specific goal of undermining certain local tribal claims to regional power. The PRDtrH would be the next inclusion and was expanded on in detail in chapter five. By the late Persian Period, the term had been adapted again, building on the demonymic undertones in the PRDtrH, the term was fully adapted to mean the peasants/locals of the Southern Levant as is apparent in Esther and Song.

Its final adaptation was made in the composition of Chronicles. No longer a self-identified group in the region the Chronicler was likely influenced by a misunderstanding of its use in Esther and Song. He presumed it was an irregular pluralized feminine noun describing a class of women who were sexual slaves. Within Chronicles, women who had been formerly identified as wives and not פִּלְגֶשֶׁת/*pîlegeš* were labeled as פִּלְגֶשֶׁת/*pîlegeš*. Many previously unknown concubines were listed, not by name, but as mothers of important men's children, while many of the PTDtrH uses were simply not copied over.

A reading of the PRDtrH cannot be done with an understanding of only one period of governance of the region. Therefore, a short history of the region was presented in chapter four. Most significantly an understanding of conditions for those native to Yehud under Persian rule explains the story arch and sudden disappearance of the Pilagshean within the DtrH. This was not intended to only be a recording of the indigenous population's history in the nation's history, but it was meant to include the decline of the people in the land under Persia via oppressive measures including rape and genocide.

While that remains the largest arc in the story, an understanding of the whole history of the region was significant as the people had their own memories of life before centralized rulers as well as what life became under kings and empires. The people's tales were masterfully

included to recall and reflect history outside of their own remembrance and how the non-elite of Jerusalem were impacted by the ruling tribes. Reading the entire PRDtrH as a group of texts in relationship with each other uncovers a story arch within the DtrH. As the reader moves further away from tribal polity and closer to centralized government and religion, the worse life got for the indigenous people.

Chapter five rolls into chapter six where the reading of the PRDtrH includes its brutal postexilic setting. In this chapter I attempted to explain motivations of the people in the region while highlighting the parallels between the text and the on the ground reality of life under Persian rule.

Initially paralleling the story arc of the people without a king spiraling downward, PRDtr diverges from the bounce back described by Dtr. Chapter six presents PRDtr in contrast to DtrH during the composition phase. Where Dtr intended to show that Israel needed a king, it just needed to be the right king, PRDtr countered this by pointing out that even the best kings in Israel were corrupt and abusive. Without PRDtr, DtrH follows the conquest of the land ending at the death of Samson. Following this would have been the Samuel narratives including the rise and fall of Saul and David followed by the climax in the reign of Solomon. The fall of the kingdom stemming from the division of the kingdom. However, When PRDtr is placed in DtrH, each ruling tribe of Israel and Judah is marked as unjust, corrupt, and significantly part of the fall. Of course, the Persian Empire would have supported the inclusion of these sections of text into the history. They existed to undermine a monarchy from within.

The first PTDtrH describes an unmarried woman from an unidentified tribe living in the land belonging to the descendants of Joseph. This is the only thread that has only the term פִּלְגֶשׁ/*pīlegeš* in common with Ezekiel 23. As the two sisters described in that passage were

“sexually active single women” זִנָּה/zōnā prior to their marriage to the cult of YHWH, this woman was unattached, (though not referred to as “a sexually active single woman” זִנָּה/zōnā), she was set as an example of what life was like for the indigenous people prior to centralized government and religion. She is not raped, maimed, or left for dead. This is not to say that even before centralized religion and government existed, that the people were permitted to choose their own ruler. No, the redactor makes it clear that even without central religion, YHWH selected the ruler.

The plight of the Pilagshean deteriorated quickly with the introduction of a priestly tribe. There was no more freedom for women to choose; to remain unmarried or to leave their husbands, as had been the case with Achsah, the Pilagshean of Shechem, and even Jephthah’s mother. The Pilagshean wife from Judah, paralleling Oholibah’s tale in Ezekiel 23, leaves her husband to become a “sexually active single woman” זִנָּה/zōnā, and is brutally punished for it through lack of bodily autonomy, public rape, and dismemberment.

This pattern continues to include the threat against rebelling against the elite rulers as is displayed in the taking of Rizpah’s children to be killed. The decline continues where the one who should protect the people leaves them to be raped and left for dead as was the situation of the Pilagshean of Jerusalem. The parallels to Ezekiel 23 can be found in both of these; these texts were intended to be a threat to the local population of Yehud to not rebel against Persia and to obey the priests, but secretly they played the role of warning the people of the corruption of the ruling elite migrant Babylonian Jewish population.

The thread that relates the existence and outcome of the Pilagshean of Jerusalem not only has parallels to Ezekiel 23. It covertly puts on display the current situation of the indigenous

population of Yehud in the fifth-century BCE – the colonizing, abandonment, vulnerability in war, and rejection from inclusion in Jerusalem.

GLOSSARY

ENGLISH/ENGLISH TRANSLITERATION

ʿĀmâ/אמה: A woman's maid (if the maid of a wife, optionally available to the husband for the purpose of child production, cf. Gen 16:3-4; 30:3); a female sold into servitude with included sex rights. This is the only female subservient position in the ancient Hebrew household with stated lawful rights to leave an abusive husband (Ex 21:11). This term occurs twenty times in seventeen verses in the DtrH. The only instances in the Book of Judges are concerning the Pilagshean (Judg 9:18 and Judg 19:19).

Anchoring Bias: (or effect) What occurs when someone is given an information starting point, which influences all estimates thereafter.¹

Availability Cascade: "an outcome of the need to reduce cognitive effort and act in ways that are consistent with the majority's behavior."²

Ba'al/בעל: Often translated as husband, lord, and master. I will use the term lord not only to distinguish it from אֵל/ʾēl as described above, but to enable the reader to recognize the root of the word having direct connection to the Ugaritic and Canaanite deity Ba'al

Ba'ālâ/בעלה: Though commonly translated as marriage or bride, this term will be translated as "lording one" not only to distinguish it from wife, but to enable the reader to recognize the root of the word as בעל/ba'al, which connotes a subordinate position.

Barbarian: defined by James C. Scott, "'barbarian' and its many cousins – 'savage,' 'wild,' 'raw,' 'forest people,' 'hill people' – are terms invented in state centers to describe and stigmatize those who had not yet become state subjects."³ In its use in the biblical texts, it carries the meaning "un-genealogize."

Dehumanic – n./adj. derogatory nomenclature. Often an imperial tool used to dehumanize conquered and/or enslaved peoples, though not always. A key feature is that these terms do not have their origins in self-identity; rather, they are applied by an outsider. Dehumanics do more than dehumanize; they remove empathy from the relationship.⁴ These terms may be partitive (Melungeon, Hapa), locative/geographic (Gypsy, Gook, Chink, Oriental, Bohemian, hill people, heathen), animalistic (Mulatto, pig, coyote, yellowbelly, fat cat), action (whore, Spic, Wetback, Guido, cracker), objectifying (Eskimo, pussy, faggot), and descriptive (retard, Nigger, tranny,

¹Tversky and Kahneman, "Judgment Under Uncertainty," 20.

² Pollock, Rindova, and Maggitti. "Market Watch," 336.

³ Scott, *Against the Grain*, 221.

⁴ Erich Wise, in private conversation, September 14, 2019.

illegal, slut, woman).⁵ These terms are at their foundation intended to deal in, describe, create, and enforce power relationships.

Demonym - n. a term used to describe a group of people from a specific location regardless of race, ethnicity, tribal, or national affiliation.⁶

Deuteronomistic History (DtrH): For the purposes of this book: Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, 1-2 Sam 1-2 Kings. This is not to say that I necessarily believe in an upset authorship known as the Deuteronomy rather that there is as scholarly consensus that these six books form a canon of their own and interact with each other in distinct ways.

Deuteronomist (Dtr): Author or editor of DtrH. For the purpose of this work the only distinction I make between composition layers is to single out the Pilagshean Ribbon Dtr (PRDtr) as separate from other layers of Dtr work.

Entitativity: *n.* the extent to which a group or collective is considered by others to be a real entity having unity, coherence, and internal organization rather than a set of independent individuals. In general, groups whose members share a common fate, are similar to one another, and are located close together are more likely to be considered a group rather than a mere aggregation. [first described by Donald Campbell]”⁷

Gentilic: adj. “of or relating to a noun or adjective that denotes ethnic or national affiliation;” alternately *n.* “a name with gentilic value.”⁸

Hidden Transcript: the actions and words that contravene the public transcript. These are specific to “a social site and to a particular set of actors,” it is “a whole range of practices” including speech.⁹

Homo Sacer: “A person banned from society, excluded from its legal protections but still subject to the sovereign’s power.”¹⁰

Hōtēn and Hātān/חתן: male-in-law - a man connected to an otherwise non-family member through a sexual relationship with a female, insinuates additional level of protection between otherwise unconnected males. An Akkadian loanword.

⁵ This list is by no means exhaustive.

⁶ The first written example of demonym is from the mid-nineteenth-century CE originally meaning pen name; its current meaning came about in the 1990s, *English Oxford Living Dictionary*.
<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/demonym>

⁷ *APA Dictionary of Psychology*, <https://dictionary.apa.org/entitativity>.

⁸ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/gentilic>

⁹ Scott, *Hidden Transcripts*, 14.

¹⁰ Dunbar-Ortiz, *Indigenous Peoples' History*, 218.

Mid-enfranchised: n. one who has risen or been raised out of an oppressed position, gaining restricted power and freedom that is used to oppress others; one who oppresses others in order to retain limited power or to appease the fear of becoming thrust into a lower position resulting in greater experienced oppression.¹¹

Na‘arāh/נערה: Here translated only as girl, distinguishing it from אמה/’āmā, and allowing it to maintain some ambiguity with regard to social position.

Pīlegeš/פילגש: this term will be referenced repeatedly throughout the dissertation. Throughout the introduction and into part of chapter three I will use the Hebrew form of the word. In chapter three when I begin to translate the strands of text that contain פילגש/pīlegeš I will actually translate the term as savage, barbarian, and local, peasant, and Pilagshean. This term often carries the meaning “un-genealogize.”

Repatriate: A person who migrates to a place considered to be an ancestral home. This may be a person returning to a birth land or a descendant migrating to a location that has been mythologized through family lore as “home.”

Ribbon: A grouping of noncontiguous storylines within a canon that can be linked together to form a story arc.

Savage: “not domesticated or under control ... lacking the restraints normal to civilized human beings.”¹² In its use in the biblical texts, it carries the meaning “un-genealogize.”

Šiphâ/שפחה: often translated “handmaid,” but more accurately “slave-girl.” Parallels with עבד (Gen 12:16) and used somewhat interchangeably with אמה/’āmā though שפחה/šiphâ denotes a lower social station. Named שפחה/šiphâ in the HB: Hagar, Zilpah, and Bilhah. Alternately, the term is used figuratively in a self-deprecating manner when a woman is speaking to someone of higher rank (e.g. Hannah, 1 Sam 1:18; Abigail, 1 Sam 25:27; Ruth, Rth 2:14).

Thread: One story line within a ribbon as described above.

Virgin: a woman who has not borne a child.

Zānâ/זנה: v. A highly debated verb with regard to its use in the DtrH. This verb is used 95 times in the HB. However, it only appears two times in Deuteronomy and four times in the whole of the Former Prophets - all three occurrences are in the Book of Judges. Twice the verb is used to describe the tribes of Israel going to the deities of the locals (Judg 2:17 and 8:33); once after an

¹¹ This position can be used to in place of the psychological phenomenon “hurt people hurt people,” or an economic position such as petite bourgeoisie. On the microcosmic level virtually anybody can be described as mid-enfranchised; on the macrocosmic level the term can only be applied to a group who has systemically experienced disenfranchisement and never to a group that has experienced systemic liberty and enfranchisement.

¹² <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/savage>; cf. “Barbarian” above.

object (Judg 8:27). The last time it describes the actions of the פִּילֶגֶשׁ/*pîlegeš* in Judges 19. With regard to deity worship the implication is that the people are not tied to a specific deity for results but will worship any deity.

Ze/they: third person, neutered, singular personal pronoun.

Zir/Their: third person, neutered, singular possessive pronoun.

Zōnâ/זִנְיָה: n. free-agent, single mother.¹³ Used even less often than its verbal counterpart, this noun occurs a total of 34 times in the HB, once in Deuteronomy and eight times in the Former Prophets: Deuteronomy (23:19 [18]); four times in Joshua (2:1; 6:17, 22, 25 - all used for Rahab); twice in the Book of Judges (11:1 – mother of Jephthah's; 16:1 the woman of Gaza who Samson went into); and twice in 1 Kings (3:16 – the women who fought for a living child; 22:38 – the women of Samaria who bathed in the blood of the king of Israel).

HEBREW

אִישׁ/יֵשׁ: This word will be translated as a man whenever it is in absolute form and describing a male character without a possessive pronominal suffix attached to it. In some cases, the term will be translated as each or one, as it is understood to also apply as a neutered pronominal adjective. In cases where there is a pronominal suffix on אִישׁ it will be translated as husband.

אִמָּה/’āmā: A woman's maid (if the maid of a wife, optionally available to the husband for the purpose of child production, cf. Gen 16:3-4; 30:3); a female sold into servitude with included sex rights. This is the only female subservient position in the ancient Hebrew household with stated lawful rights to leave an abusive husband (Ex 21:11). This term occurs twenty times in seventeen verses in the DtrH. The only instances in BJ are concerning the Pilagshean (Judg 9:18 and Judg 19:19).

אִשָּׁה/’iššā: This word will be translated as a woman whenever it is in absolute form without a possessive marker. In cases where there is a pronominal possessive suffix on אִשָּׁה/’iššā it will be translated as wife; additionally, in cases where the preposition ל with a pronominal suffix or proper name is used to describe possession concerning אִשָּׁה/’iššā it will be translated as wife.¹⁴

¹³ Renate Jost, defines זִנְיָה/*zônâ* as "die Alleinstehende" (296) and "die ungebundene Frau" (300), *Gender, Sexualität, Und Macht in Der Anthropologie Des Richterbuches*, Beiträge Zur Wissenschaft Vom Alten Und Neuen Testament, 9, Folge, Heft 4 = Der Ganzen Sammlung Heft 164. (Stuttgart: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 2006).

¹⁴ אִשָּׁה/’iššā appears 781 times in 686 verses; אִשָּׁה/’iššā + sufx appears 170 times in 159 verse; 56 of those verses are in Gen; 6 times Exod.; 1 Leviticus; 9 Numbers (5 in the ordeal Num 5); 3 times Deuteronomy; 1 time Joshua; 12 times Judges (7 in chapter 13 - Samson birth story; 3 in chapter 15 Samson adult; 2 in chapter 21 daughters of Shiloh); 10 times 1 Sam; 6 times 2 Sam; 11 times in 1 Kgs; 1 time Isa; 9 times Jeremiah; 1 time Ezekiel; 1 time Hos; 1 time Amos; 5 times Zechariah (chapter 12); the only time this combination does not translate as wife is Genesis. 7:2 "Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee seven and seven, the male and his female; and of the beasts that are not clean two, the male and his female," but one could argue that "wife" is acceptable if anthropomorphic.

בעל/ba'al: Often translated as husband, lord, and master. I will use the term lord not only to distinguish it from איש/ 'iš as described above, but to enable the reader to recognize the root of the word having direct connection to the Ugaritic and Canaanite deity Ba'al

בעלה/Ba'alā: Though commonly translated as marriage or bride, this term will be translated as "larded one" not only to distinguish it from wife, but to enable the reader to recognize the root of the word as בעל, which connotes a subordinate position.

חתן/Hōtēn and Hātān: male-in-law - a man connected to an otherwise non-family member through a sexual relationship with a female, insinuates additional level of protection between otherwise unconnected males. An Akkadian loan word that is anachronistic to the pre-monarchic period of Israel.

זנה/zānā: v. A highly debated verb with regard to its use in the DtrH. This verb is used 95 times in the HB. However, it only appears two times in Deuteronomy and four times in the whole of the Former Prophets - all three occurrences are in the Book of Judges. Twice the verb is used to describe the tribes of Israel going to the deities of the locals (Judg 2:17 and 8:33); once after an object (Judg 8:27). The last time it describes the actions of the פילגש/pīlegeš in Judges 19. With regard to deity worship the implication is that the people are not tied to a specific deity for results but will worship any deity.

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term is used figuratively in a self-deprecating manner when a woman is speaking to someone of higher rank (e.g. Hannah, 1 Sam 1:18; Abigail, 1 Sam 25:27; Ruth, Rth 2:14).

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¹ pg 174: the 1000 wives are "natürlich im weselichen Israelitinnen" - is this worth citing?

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